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THE

CHURCH HISTORY

OF

SCOTLAND

FROM THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE CHRISTIAN ERA
TO THE PRESENT CENTURY

BY THE

REV. JOHN CUNNINGHAM,
MINISTER OF CRIEFF

IN TWO VOLUMES

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THE

CHURCH HISTORY OF SCOTLAND.

CHAPTER I.

When James was making his triumphal progress to London, the Puritans, expecting to find favour with a Puritan king, met him on the way, and presented to him their millenary petition, so called because it was said to be signed by a thousand ministers. In consequence of this, and probably also to exhibit his own theological attainments, the monarch determined to hold a conference at Hampton Court, of the two parties who divided the English Church. Nine bishops, seven deans, and an archdeacon, were nominated to represent the High Church party; four ministers to state the views of the Puritans. They came together on the 14th January 1604; the former in the habits of their respective orders; the latter in furred gowns, like Turkey merchants, or professors in foreign universities. The conference continued three days. The first was with the bishops and deans alone, when the king made a speech, saying, "that he was now come into the promised land: that he sat among grave and reverend men, and was not a king, as formerly, without state, nor in a place where beardless boys would brave him to his face." He, however, mentioned some things which he considered as abuses, such as confirmation, baptism by women, and the form of absolution; and for five hours together, according to the testimony of Dr Andrews, "his Majesty did that day

wonderfully play the Puritan."* The bishops did not, like Andrew Melville, shake him by the sleeve, and tell him he was God's silly vassal, but upon bended knees they humbly responded to his arguments.

The second day's conference was held on the 16th of January, when the four Puritan ministers were called in on the one side, and two bishops and six or eight deans on the other. Patrick Galloway, the minister of Perth, was also permitted to be present. Dr Reynolds of Cambridge, in name of his Puritanic brethren, humbly craved that some alterations might be made in the doctrines, government, and services of the Church. His chief objections were to the Service-Book. He objected to the reading of the Apocrypha; to the interrogatories in baptism; and to the sign of the cross; to the surplice, and other superstitious habits; to the ring in marriage; and to the churching of women by the name of purification. These ceremonies, it was argued, were either sinful, or at best indifferent, and to make them compulsory was to encroach on Christian liberty. But the king was no longer a Puritan, as on the preceding day; he declared the surplice to be a comely garment, and the sign of the cross as old as Constantine; "and as to the power of the Church," said he, "in things indifferent, I will not argue that point with you, but answer as kings in parliament, '*le Roi s'avisera.*' This is like Mr John Black, a beardless boy, who told me at the last conference in Scotland, that he would hold conformity with me in doctrine, but that every man, as to ceremonies, was to be left to his own liberty; but I will have none of that: I will have one doctrine, one discipline, one religion in substance and ceremony; never speak more to that point, how far you are bound to obey." Dr Reynolds proceeded to complain of excommunication by lay chancellors; and to desire that the clergy might have liberty to hold periodical meetings; but at this all the king's bitter reminiscences of Scotch presbyteries, synods, and General Assemblies, rose up before him, and he sharply told the Puritan ministers, that he saw they were aiming at a Scotch Presbytery, "which," said his Majesty, "agrees with

* Neal's History of the Puritans, vol. i. pp. 410–14.

monarchy as well as God and the devil; then Jack and Tom, Will and Dick, shall meet, and at their pleasure censure both me and my Council. Therefore, pray stay one seven years before you demand that of me, and if then you find me pursy and fat, and my windpipe stuffed, I will perhaps hearken to you; for let that government be up, and I am sure I shall be kept in breath; but till you find I grow lazy, pray let that alone. I remember how they used the poor lady my mother in Scotland, and me in my minority." Then turning to the bishops, he put his hand to his hat and said, "My lords, I may thank you that these Puritans plead for my supremacy, for if once you are out and they in place, I know what would become of my supremacy, *for no bishop, no king.*"*

The third day was chiefly occupied with the bishops and deans, and the king spoke so much in harmony with their feelings, that the old archbishop cried out, "undoubtedly your Majesty speaks by the special assistance of God's Spirit." The Puritans were only called in for a little to hear the few trifling alterations which had been agreed upon. The bishops and deans exulted at this issue of the conference, and pronounced James to be the Solomon of his age, and to unite in his one person the priest and the king. James himself was exalted above measure at the part he had played. He wrote to Scotland that he had soundly peppered the Puritans, and that they had fled before him. "It were no reason," said his Majesty, aiming at a pun, "that those who refuse the airy sign of the cross after baptism, should have their purses stuffed with any more solid and substantial *crosses.* They fled me so from argument to argument, without ever answering me directly, that I was forced to tell them, that if any of them when boys had disputed thus in the college, the moderator would have fetched them up, and applied the rod to their buttocks." Thus wrote the king of such men as Dr Reynolds, one of the lights of the age. But the Puritan party throughout the country felt that they had been mocked, and complained loudly that justice had not been done to them. The Presbyterians in Scotland sympa-

* Neal's History, vol. i. pp. 414–17.

thized with them, and when Patrick Galloway's narrative of the conference was read in the Presbytery of Edinburgh, James Melville moved that prayer should be offered up for their comfort and relief, and that care should be taken lest Scotland should catch the contagion of English superstition.*

In the month of March following the king delivered a speech in the English Parliament, which gave offence to thousands on both sides of the Tweed. He pronounced the Puritans to be a sect unable to be endured in any well-governed commonwealth. He acknowledged the Roman Church to be his mother-church, though defiled with some infirmities and corruptions, as the Jews were when they crucified Christ. He did not wish the temple thrown down, but purified, that so he might enter in. He would meet the Romanists midway; and would ever yield all reverence to antiquity in points of ecclesiastical policy.† It was already becoming plain that James I. of England was a different man from James VI. of Scotland.

The General Assembly had been indited to meet at Aberdeen on the last Tuesday of July, but the king prorogued it till the following year. Notwithstanding the prorogation, the Presbytery of St Andrews, ever faithful to its principles and its leaders, determined to keep the diet on the appointed day; and, accordingly, James Melville, William Erskine, and William Murray appeared as its commissioners in the Church of St Nicholas at Aberdeen, true to the time; and, finding no other commissioners there, they publicly protested, and took instruments in the hands of their notaries that they had appeared, and that if the Church suffered skaith through the not keeping of the Assembly, it was not to be imputed to them or their presbytery.‡ The bad feeling excited by this stretch of the royal prerogative, in defiance of the many laws which guaranteed an annual Assembly, was increased by the circumstance, that James was at that moment using every endeavour to effectuate a union between the kingdoms. The Church was patriotic and far-seeing

* Neal's History, vol. i. pp. 417–19. Calderwood's History, vol. vi.
† Calderwood's History, vol. vi. Neal's History, vol. ii.
‡ Calderwood's History, vol. vi. p. 264–68.

enough devoutly to desire this; but it dreaded that the Anglican episcopate and ritual might be extended to Scotland, and that the General Assembly was prorogued to prevent its remonstrances.

As the month of July 1605—when the General Assembly was to meet—approached, the old Presbyterian spirit began to revive, and it was rumoured throughout the country that an effort would be made to undo the legislation of the last eight years.* The court took alarm, and in the month of June, when many of the presbyteries had already elected their representatives, a circular-letter was sent them, signed by Sir Alexander Straiton, the Royal Commissioner, and Patrick Galloway, the Moderator of last Assembly, requesting them to stay their representatives from keeping the diet.† This letter had the effect of keeping the great majority of the Church's commissioners at home. Dread of the consequence of disobedience, anxiety for peace, dislike of being mixed up in a quarrel, operated then, as they always do, except in times of violent excitement.

On the 2d of July only nineteen ministers appeared at Aberdeen. Straiton of Lauriston came too, and presented to them a letter from the Lords of the Secret Council. As this letter was addressed—"To our trusty friends, the brethren of the ministry convened at their Assembly at Aberdeen," it was agreed that it could not be read till a Moderator was appointed. Straiton declined being present at the election, but, before leaving, he suggested Forbes of Alford, and, in compliance with his wishes, Forbes was chosen. The letter was then read, and it charged them instantly to dissolve, and that without fixing any day for their next meeting till they had first consulted his Majesty.‡ The ministers proved their moderation by resolving to adjourn without despatching a single piece of business, but to adjourn without fixing the time of their next meeting was to surrender a principle which was a part of their religion—a principle which had been secured to them by law, and upon which they

* Spottiswood's History, lib. vii.

† Forbes's Records, p. 384, Wodrow Ed. Calderwood's History, vol. vi.

‡ Forbes's Records, p. 388. Calderwood, vol. vi.

believed depended the continued existence of their Church. They therefore framed a respectful letter to the Secret Council, explaining their conduct, and then adjourned, to meet again on the last Tuesday of September. When this resolution was come to, the Royal Commissioner, foiled of his principal purpose, protested that he did not acknowledge their meeting for a lawful Assembly; upon which the Moderator made counter-protestation that it was and behoved to be a lawful Assembly, in respect of their warrant to meet, the direction of the Word of God, the laws of the land, and the continual custom of the Kirk. Straiton now took a more violent step, and charged the ministers, by a messenger, forthwith to depart, under pain of horning. The Assembly protested, and took instruments, that they were ready instantly to obey the tenor of the charge, and so quietly dispersed.*

The Laird of Lauriston appears to have been aware that the fact of the Assembly having been constituted and adjourned to a future day would give deep cause of offence to the king and his bishops, and therefore, on his return to Edinburgh, he declared to the Council that, by proclamation at the market-cross, on the evening preceding the day on which the Assembly was to convene, he had forbidden it to meet, a statement which the ministers vehemently denied, and which his own conduct appears to refute. In consequence of this statement, Forbes, Welsh, and several other ministers, were cited before the Council, either for having been present at the Assembly, or for having approved of its proceedings, and sent prisoners to Blackness. The mass of the people were indignant at this unjustifiable severity. The preachers preached against it, and the populace talked against it. The Council thought to check this by issuing two proclamations—the one discharging presbyteries from appointing commissioners to the adjourned Assembly, and the other prohibiting all Church Courts and ministers, in public or in private, from approving of the proceedings of the ministers at Aberdeen. But it is difficult to stifle free thought. James Melville wrote an able apology for the

* Forbes's Records, pp. 392–94. Calderwood, vol. vi.

imprisoned ministers. The imprisoned ministers themselves directed a respectful letter to the king, vindicating their conduct. Public indignation rose higher, and James felt it necessary to publish a proclamation, setting forth, that although it was desirable that as much uniformity as possible should exist between the united kingdoms, he did not intend to make any sudden innovations on the civil or ecclesiastical institutions of Scotland, and appointing a General Assembly to be held at Dundee on the last Tuesday of July.*

On the 24th of October, fourteen ministers were brought before the Secret Council; and when called to answer for their conduct, they gave in a written declinature of the jurisdiction of the court. The Council repelled the declinature, declared the Assembly to have been unlawful, and those who had met in it to be subject to punishment. A fortnight after this, on the 5th of November, the English parliament was to have met; but that day was rendered for ever memorable by the discovery of the gunpowder treason; the first news of which carried agitation and alarm throughout the kingdom. While James and his courtiers were congratulating themselves on their escape from the plots of the Papists, Forbes and his Presbyterian brethren were languishing in prison. The king had unpleasant recollections about declinatures in the days of his weakness; and now when he was strong he resolved to have his revenge. He sent down directions to have Forbes, Welsh, Duncan, Sharp, Dury, and Strachan tried for treason.†

On the 10th of January 1606, they were brought up for trial before the Justice-Depute, assisted by several of the nobility, the indictment being laid upon the Act 1584, touching his Majesty's jurisdiction over all Estates. After a legal argument, it was decided by the judges, that to decline the judgment of the Council was treason—the Earl of Marr, Lord Holyroodhouse, and John Preston dissenting.‡ A jury was now empannelled; and it was carefully explained to them by the king's advocate, that the only question which

* Calderwood's History, vol. vi. Spottiswood's History, lib. vii.

† Spottiswood's History, lib. vii. Calderwood, vol. vi.

‡ Calderwood's History, vol. vi. p. 379.

they had to decide was, whether or not the indicted ministers had declined the jurisdiction of the Council, and that their own signatures to the declinature placed the fact beyond all controversy. The jury had been packed by the Crown; they were threatened and brow-beat by the Justice-Clerk and the advocate; the fact of the ministers having declined the jurisdiction of the Council was certain; and yet so strong was the sense of the injustice that was about to be perpetrated, that six out of the fifteen jurymen refused, after six hours' consultation, to bring in a verdict of guilty.*

There is still extant a letter, written by Sir Thomas Hamilton, the advocate, to the king, on the day on which the sentence was passed, in which he mentions the difficulties with which he had to struggle, and the infamous methods he was obliged to employ to procure the condemnation of the ministers, and expressing a devout wish he should have no more such work to do.† The whole proceedings were undoubtedly arbitrary, oppressive, and unjust, and prove that James's love of unlimited power was now getting free scope. So long as he remained in Scotland, every pruriency in his character was sufficiently checked; powerful barons rebelled; popular ministers defied him to his face; and, with all the will in the world, he had not the strength to punish them. But when he went to England he found himself on the throne of a woman who had ruled with a high hand, and had exacted an obedience and a deference unknown in Scotland; bishops in lawn sleeves bowed the knee to him; nobles, with princely domains, competed for his smiles; fleets and armies awaited his bidding. Like Jeshurum, he waxed fat, and kicked. The king began to develop into the despot.

On the 9th of July, the parliament assembled at Perth.

* Forbes's Records, Wod. Ed. Calderwood's History, vol. vi. Cook's History of the Church, vol. ii.

† This letter has been published by Lord Hailes, and is quoted by Dr Cook in his History. Lord Hailes remarks that it gives a more lively idea of those times than a hundred chronicles could do. "We see here," says he, "the prime minister, in order to obtain a sentence agreeable to the king, address the judges with promises and threats, pack the jury, and then deal with them without scruple and ceremony."

It was customary at this period for the nobles to ride in state to their place of meeting, clothed in their scarlet robes of office. Ten bishops were in the cavalcade on the first day of this parliament, taking their place betwixt the earls and lords. First came the two archbishops, Gladstone and Spottiswood; and by the stirrup of Gladstone walked an Angusshire minister, of tall stature, with his cap in hand. Next to them rode the Bishops of Dunkeld and Galloway; next, the Bishops of Ross and Dunblane; next, the Bishops of Moray and Caithness; and last of all, the Bishops of Orkney and the Isles. Blackburn, the Bishop of Aberdeen, thought such pomp unbecoming the simplicity of a minister, and walked to parliament on foot.*

The chief business of the parliament was to set up the state of bishops, with all its ancient rents and privileges, and to erect a number of prelacies into temporal lordships. A paction had been made betwixt the bishops and the lords: the bishops were to give their consent to the erection of the prelacies into temporal lordships; and the lords were to lend their help to resuscitate the ancient bishoprics.† An act was first passed declaring the king to be supreme over all persons and causes; and after it followed an act for the restitution of the Estate of bishops. The statute proceeds upon the preamble, that, though his Majesty was no longer present with his Scottish subjects, absence had not bred in his royal mind oblivion of their good, and that, anxious to maintain justice and religion as the pillars of the kingdom, and to preserve the ancient policy of the Three Estates, which had been unwittingly all but destroyed by the Act of Annexation of the temporalities of benefices to the Crown, he now, with the consent of the Estates, retracted, rescinded, reduced, cassed, abrogated, and annulled the Act of Annexation,—and reponed, restored, and reintegrated the Estate of bishops to their ancient and accustomed honour, dignities, prerogatives, privileges, livings, lands, teinds, rents, thirds, and estate. It was specially declared, however, that this act was to extend only to bishoprics, and was not to affect those

* Calderwood's History, vol. vi. pp. 492, 493.

† Calderwood's History, vol. vi.

other benefices which his Majesty, in his princely liberality, had bestowed upon his faithful servants, and which were now anew confirmed to them. Another act was passed to prevent the dilapidation of bishoprics in future.* The parliament did not close with the same Episcopal pomp as that with which it was opened; for the bishops were no sooner restored to their ancient estate than they quarrelled about their proper place in the procession, maintaining they were entitled to take precedence of earls, and to ride after the marquises; and rather than yield the point, they resolved not to join in the procession at all, but to proceed to the parliament on foot.†

The six ministers who had been convicted of treason were still in prison awaiting their doom: it might be death. But James, though despotic, was not cruel, and he resolved to make an effort to reclaim the irreclaimable Presbyterians of the north. Full of the triumphant memories of his victory over the Puritans, he resolved to send for some of the best-known Scottish ministers to court, that amidst the glare of royal and Episcopal splendour they might be brought to reason. So early as the month of March, a royal missive had been directed to eight ministers, including the two Melvilles, requesting their presence at London in September; and at the same time five of the Scotch bishops were ordered to be in attendance, as the representatives of the opposite party in the Church.

Sept. 20, 1606.

On their arrival in London, the Scotch ministers were waited upon by the Dean of Salisbury, and on the 20th of the month conducted to Hampton Court, where they immediately got presence, and were permitted to kiss the king's hand. The king had just dined—he had not swallowed the last mouthful—and was in high good-humour. He joked with Mr Balfour about his long beard, asked about the progress of the plague in Edin-

* Acts of the Scottish Parliament, James VI., parl. xviii. chapters ii. iii.

† Calderwood's History, vol. vi. p. 493. There is still extant a letter from the Archbishop of St Andrews to the king, dated 20th July 1607, in which his Grace asks his Majesty to give instructions as to the precedence of the archbishops and bishops.

burgh, and dismissed the ministers with smiles. The dean, who was still their attendant, took them to dinner, and before parting with them, requested them to be present on the following day in the king's chapel to hear sermon. They came, and were conducted into a pew by themselves, close by the pulpit. The king, queen, and nobles were there, and Barlow, Bishop of Lincoln, was the preacher. He chose his text from Acts xx. 28, "Take heed to yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost has made you overseers," and toiled to prove the supremacy of bishops above presbyters, and the inconvenience of parity. On the 22d of the month they were again sent for to speak to his Majesty after dinner. On their arrival they were courteously received by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and soon afterwards the king entered the presence-chamber, followed by a train of Scotch nobles and bishops. James made a long speech, chiefly bearing upon the Assembly at Aberdeen, and his desire to have a legal and peaceable Assembly to set all things in order. According to arrangement, James Melville answered in a respectful manner, but avoiding any explicit declaration of opinion on the controverted points.*

On the day following they were again brought to chapel, and heard Dr Buckridge, the Bishop of Rochester, preach from Romans xiii. 1, "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers," from which he attempted to show that the king was supreme in ecclesiastical as well as in civil causes, and made odious comparisons between the Pope and Presbytery, as being equally opposed to princes. After dinner they were again brought into the royal presence. The king asked whether or not they justified the conventicle at Aberdeen, as he was pleased to call it. The Scotch bishops one by one condemned it; but when it came to Andrew Melville, he reasoned that it had sufficient authority in the Word of God and the laws of the realm. The other ministers followed in the same strain. Reference being made to the trial of the six ministers for treason, Melville turned upon the advocate, who was present, and accused him of favouring Papists and persecuting the ministers of Christ.

* Calderwood's History, vol. vi. p. 567. Spottiswood, lib. vii.

"And still, my lord," said he, "you show yourself possessed of the same spirit; for, not content with having pleaded against them in Scotland, you still continue ὁ κατηγορος των αδηλφων." At this phrase, the king turned to the Archbishop of Canterbury, and exclaimed, "What's that he said? I think he calls him Antichrist. Nay, by God, it is the devil's name in the Revelation of their well-beloved John!"*

On Sabbath, the 28th of September, they were again brought to the king's chapel to hear Dr Andrews, Bishop of Chichester, discourse from the Book of Numbers, upon the silver trumpets which were blown by the Jews at their solemn convocations; from which the ingenious divine undertook to prove that it belonged to emperors and kings to convene and discharge ecclesiastical assemblies. Next day was St Michael's Day, and again the Scotch ministers were conducted to their accustomed pew in the chapel. No sermon was preached on this high day; but on the altar were laid two closed books, two empty chalices, two candlesticks with unlighted candles; and the king and queen, devoutly approaching it, presented their offerings. On the day following they were yet again required to be present, to hear Dr King, Dean of Christ's Church, discourse from the 8th chapter of Solomon's Song, and demonstrating from the vineyard which Solomon had at Baalhaman, and which he let out to keepers, that lay elders had no place or office in the Church.† Here ended the lessons for the Scotch ministers. When James resolved to put them through this course of controversial divinity, he must have fancied they would have been overawed by the authority, and silenced by the arguments of the English dignitaries. It was perhaps well meant, but it was very farcical; and it is a marvel that Melville, considering his imperious temper, bore it with patience.

More than once after this the ministers were called before the members of the Scotch Privy Council, who were present

* Calderwood's History, vol. vi. p. 577. This story is sometimes told a little differently. According to one version, the Earl of Northampton asked the king what Melville had called the Lord Advocate. "He called him the *meikle devil*," replied the king.

† Spottiswood's History, lib. vii. Calderwood's History, vol. vi.

in London, and harassed with questions as to the Aberdeen Assembly, and as to whether or not they sympathized with and prayed for the six ministers who had been convicted of treason. They strongly protested against this treatment as illegal and unjust, and craved to be allowed to return to their native country; but this was denied them. It was becoming too plain that the king, having failed to convert them, was now seeking an occasion against them. They who seek opportunities generally find them. On St Michael's Day, after returning from the chapel, Andrew Melville had amused himself by writing a Latin epigram upon what he had seen:—

"Cur stant clausi Anglis libri duo regia in ara,
Lumina cæca duo, pollubra sicca duo?
Num sensum cultumque Dei tenet Anglia clausum,
Lumine cæca suo, sorde sepulta sua?
Romano an ritu dum regalem instruit aram,
Purpuream pingit relligiosa lupam."*

A copy of these verses had in some surreptitious manner found their way into the hands of the king, who, affecting to be highly indignant at the slur which had been thrown upon the English worship, resolved to make their author suffer for it. Melville was accordingly cited before the English Council at Whitehall, and at once confessed that he was the author of the epigram, but declared that he had intended to

* Row's History, p. 234. Calderwood, vol. vi. Row thus Englishes the Latin epigram:—

"On kinglie chappell altar stands, blind candlesticks, closed books,
Dry silver basons, two of each, wherefore, says he who looks?
The minde and worship of the Lord, doth Ingland so keep closse;
Blind in hir sight, and buried in hir filthiness and drosse?
And while with Roman rites sho doth hir kinglie altar dresse,
Relligiously a purpur'd whoore to trim sho doth professe."

Such Latin poetic squibs were common in those days. Several proceeded from the pen of Melville. On the 19th of June 1606, the Archbishop of St Andrews wrote to the king, "Mr A. Melville hath begun to raise new storms with Æolic blasts. Sir, ye are my Jupiter, and I, under your Highness, Neptune. I must say,—

'Non ille imperium pelagi, sacrumque tridentem
Sed mihi sorte datum.'

Your Majesty will religate him to some Æolean—

——'Ut illic vacua se, jactet in aula.'"

(Original Letters relating to Ecclesiastical Affairs, 1603–25, published by Ban. Club.)

show it to no one unless it were to his Majesty himself, and that he had written it in deep grief at seeing such superstitious mummery in a Reformed Church, and under a reformed king, brought up under the pure light of the gospel. James himself was not present, but Dr Bancroft, the Archbishop of Canterbury, who sat near the head of the table, argued that such a libel on the worship of the Established Church was a high misdemeanour, and even amounted to treason. This Melville could not bear from a man whom he hated, and perhaps despised. He interrupted the archbishop. "My lords," said he, "Andrew Melville was never a traitor; but there was one Richard Bancroft who, during the life of the late queen, wrote a treatise against his Majesty's title to the crown; and here is the book," said he, pulling the offending treatise from his bosom. As he spoke thus, he had gradually approached the place where Bancroft sat, and now taking hold of the lawn sleeves of his rochet, he shook them, and called them Romish rags. "If you are the author," he continued, fiercely addressing the primate, "of the book called 'English Scottizing,' I regard you as the capital enemy of all the Reformed churches in Europe, and as such I will profess myself an enemy to you and your proceedings to the effusion of the last drop of my blood." Bishop Barlow attempted to interfere to save the archbishop, but Melville suddenly turning upon him reproached him for his unfair narrative of the Hampton Court Conference, and for representing the king as saying that "though he was in the Church of Scotland, he was not of it." The undaunted presbyter was at last silenced and removed, and when called in again, he was admonished by the Lord Chancellor to add modesty and discretion to his learning and years, and told that he had been found guilty of *scandalum magnatum*, and was to be committed to the custody of the Dean of St Paul's, till the king's pleasure regarding him was known.*

In a few sentences we can now trace the career of the Melvilles to its close. Andrew Melville was again called

* Spottiswood's History, lib. vii. Calderwood, vol. vi. M'Crie's Life of Melville, vol. ii.

before the Council, and after being anew examined regarding his *scandalum magnatum*, he was committed to the Tower. There he languished for three years, when he was allowed to accept an invitation to become Professor of Divinity at Sedan, where he spent the remainder of his days in broken health and spirits. His nephew James was ordered to take up his residence in Newcastle-on-Tyne, from which he was afterwards allowed to remove to Berwick, where he died. The other ministers who had accepted the king's invitation to court were allowed to return to their native country, but only under oppressive restrictions.

Close by the side of John Knox, in the list of Scottish worthies, stands Andrew Melville. He has left the deep impress of his mind upon the Scottish Church. He was a man of scholarly accomplishments, great energy, and intrepid courage. He was, no doubt, dogmatic and overbearing, and little considerate of the opinions and feelings of others; but it was a striking apology he made for himself when he said, "If my anger go downward, set your foot on it, and put it out; but if it go upward, suffer it to rise to its place."* James Melville was a man of a different mould—mild, amiable, formed to be led rather than to lead. He was completely under the influence of his uncle, whom he held in such veneration that, notwithstanding his own gentle nature, he followed him even in his most violent courses. His "Diary" presents us with some most graphic pictures of the men of his time, and in his pages there is no more prominent or pleasing portrait than his own. In almost every word, the good, kindly, conscientious man stands revealed.

But we must return to Scotland, and see what is passing there. After a long imprisonment, the fate of the six ministers who had been convicted of treason was made known—they were to be banished the country. At two o'clock on a stormy November morning, they were brought to the pier at Leith in order to embark. A large concourse of people had already assembled on the sands to bid them farewell. Welsh, for the last time on Scottish soil, lifted up his voice in prayer, and few men could pray as he did; the whole mul-

* M'Crie's Life of Melville, vol. ii.

titude then joined in singing the 23d psalm, and when the hopeful words of the last verse had died away, the exiles, for conscience sake, tore themselves from their weeping friends, and were soon steering their course down the Forth on their way to France. The other ministers who had been present at the obnoxious Assembly, but had not been indicted for treason, were banished to the most remote districts of the country, to Lewis, Cantyre, or Caithness, that their zeal might be lost amid these savage solitudes.*

The king and bishops now thought that the field was clear for a General Assembly. Eight of the ablest ministers were detained in England, and fourteen others were either in France or the Highlands. In the beginning of December the presbyteries of the Church received a royal missive to appoint certain of their number to meet with certain noblemen at Linlithgow on the 10th of the month, to take steps for suppressing Popery and removing all jars from the Church. These missives did not designate this meeting a General Assembly, took no notice of the General Assembly which had been indited for July, and, instead of allowing the presbyteries as usual to elect their own commissioners, specially nominated them; and there was a general bewilderment as to what this meeting might mean.†

However, on the appointed day, thirty-three noblemen and about a hundred and thirty ministers met at Linlithgow, and the Earl of Montrose appeared as the king's principal Commissioner. The chief business of the meeting was brought up by his Majesty's letter, in which he recommended that every presbytery should have a perpetual moderator, as a means of promoting order. The ministers were at first staggered at the proposal; but royal influence was strong, the old spirit was becoming weak, and after a committee had deliberated and reported upon the subject, it was almost unanimously agreed to. It was stipulated that these perpetual moderators should enjoy no greater jurisdiction than had been possessed by their predecessors, and should be subject to the censure of the provincial synods; but these

* Calderwood's History, vol. vi. pp. 590, 591. Row's History, p. 240.

† Calderwood's History, vol. vi. pp. 601–604.

restrictions proved weak as tow. It was farther provided that these moderators should act as agents for suppressing Popery—a popular measure; and for this service a hundred pounds Scots was assigned to each of them by his Majesty. The Convention stretched its authority still wider, and took in hand to nominate moderators to the presbyteries, making the bishops moderators of the presbyteries which met at their episcopal seats.*

The Assembly had been subservient; but the Church at large did not tamely submit to this insidious encroachment upon its constitution. Loud murmurs were heard from every part of the country. It was not merely said that the meeting at Linlithgow was not a General Assembly of the Church, but that the minute of its proceedings had been sent up to court and altered there. In these circumstances a royal proclamation was issued charging the presbyteries to accept the permanent moderators who had been appointed to them, and the nobles everywhere exerted themselves to force the Church Courts to yield. But many of the Church Courts were in no compliant humour. The Synod of Perth, the Synod of Fife, and the Presbyteries of Lothian and the Merse, distinguished themselves by their efforts to shake off these moderators, who had been fastened on their shoulders like the old man of the sea; and it was not till they found their struggles both desperate and dangerous that they sullenly succumbed to necessity. Several of the ministers who had been nominated moderators refused to accept an office so odious to their brethren and the people,† and even those who were most subservient to the king were forced to warn him that a storm was gathering.‡ James was compelled to acknowledge the difficulties he had encountered, and the

* Letter, Earl of Montrose to King, 13th December 1606. Original Letters, &c., 1603–25, Ban. Club Ed. Calderwood's History, vol. vi. pp. 604–27. Row's History, pp. 241, 242.

† Calderwood's History, vol. vi. Row's History. Scott's Narrative.

‡ There is a letter of this period by the ministers of Edinburgh to the king, which strikingly illustrates the state of feeling in the country. "We humbly request your Majesty out of your wonted clemency o pity the estate of this Kirk, pardoning some that are misled by others, sparing the flocks that will want exercise by their horning, and not punishing us and such as follow us to serve your Majesty, by discharging our Assemblies. . . . We perceive a great

conscientious zeal of the ministers for the maintenance of parity.*

A.D. 1608. It was not till the last Tuesday of July 1608 that the Assembly was again convened. The Earl of Dunbar acted as the king's Commissioner, and about forty other noblemen were present and took part in the proceedings. When their right was questioned by a minister, the moderator remarked, that without them their laws could not be carried into execution. "We," said he, "can preach and pray; they can fight." This Assembly, though tolerant of Prelacy, exhibited all the old intolerance of Popery. The Marquis of Huntly and the Earls of Angus and Errol had relapsed into error; they had not given attendance at the church; they had refused to communicate; though reasoned and remonstrated with, they were obstinate; and so it was resolved that they should again be put under the ban of the Church. Huntly, by a messenger, protested that conscience alone stood in the way of his reconciliation to the Church, and craved farther time, in hope that he might see reason to change; but his apologies were pronounced to be frivolous, and the sentence of excommunication was for the second time solemnly pronounced against him. His Majesty's Commissioner promised, that after forty days the civil sword would strike without mercy. The Presbytery of Glasgow was instructed to proceed against the Earl of Angus, the Presbytery of Perth against the Earl of Errol, and the Presbytery of Irving against Lord Semphill, who had also been reported to the Assembly as an obstinate Papist.†

The Assembly still farther showed its zeal against Popery by resolutions against Jesuits and seminary priests, against pilgrimages to chapels and wells, regarding the searching of

miscontent growing and breaking out every day more and more in all sorts of people here, . . . which in the end will overthrow all, except some timeous remedy be applied." This letter is dated 28th October 1607, and signed Galloway, Hall, Hewat; and is to be found in a Collection of Orginal Letters relating to Ecclesiastical Affairs, between 1603 and 1625, published for the Bannatyne Club.

* Spottiswood's History, lib. vii. p. 503.

† Calderwood's History, vol. vi. pp. 751–74. Row's History, pp. 249–52 Spottiswood, lib. vii.

merchant vessels for Popish books, the removal of Popish functionaries from office, and compelling the sons of the nobility who travelled abroad to have in their company a pedagogue well grounded in the faith. A lament was made that many churches were still destitute of ministers. In one district there were thirty-one; in Annandale, twenty-eight; in Nithsdale, seventeen; and so over the greater part of the country. A supplication was made for the exiled ministers; and the Commissioner promised to intercede for all save those who had been banished for treason. Finally, the ecclesiastical commissioners were re-appointed, and the Assembly was closed by prayer and the singing of psalms.*

It was universally felt that the bishops had gained strength in this Assembly. Their position had not been openly assailed; their power as commissioners and permanent moderators had been continued; and the process of development seemed to be going on unchecked, which must necessarily end in a full-blown Episcopate. For some time they had been entrusted with the sole power of modifying the stipends of the ministers, and here was one great source of their growing influence in the Church. They could raise a friendly minister to comparative plenty; they could leave a hostile one to pine in poverty. Most men, however conscientious, will have a regard to this, especially if they have a wife and family dependent upon them for subsistence. But notwithstanding the increasing power of the bishops, it is certain that there was a deep under-current of dissatisfaction in the country; and at this period there were sown the seeds of that bitter feeling toward Episcopacy which has never since been thoroughly eradicated from the Scottish mind.

But notwithstanding the changes which were in progress, the machinery of Presbyterianism was still in full working order. Synods and presbyteries were superintending the local interests of the Church, and kirk-sessions were ruling congregations. Discipline was administered with little relaxation of its ancient severity. It seems, in truth, to have

* Calderwood's History, vol. vi. pp. 751–74. Row's History, pp. 249–52. Spottiswood, lib. vii.

been designed, not so much to bring the erring to repentance, as to put them to shame. Some of the female penitents had ventured to come to church with those plaids which Scottish women have long been accustomed to wear over their heads, in order that, drawing them partly over their face, they might in some measure conceal their confusion. By solemn decrees of kirk-sessions such acts of concealment were forbidden; and frail women were enjoined to leave their plaids at home, and, taking their place on the stool of repentance, to keep their face full toward the congregation.*

A.D. 1609. On the 24th of June 1609, the parliament assembled at Edinburgh, and after passing new penal statutes against the unhappy Papists, it proceeded to legislate for the bishops. It conferred upon them the jurisdiction of commissariats, and administration of justice in all spiritual and ecclesiastical causes, as anciently enjoyed by their predecessors in Roman Catholic times. In virtue of this act, they were empowered to decide in all testamentary matters, in all matters affecting marriage and divorce, and generally in every matter which could be brought under the comprehensive words "spiritual and ecclesiastical;" and the Court of Session was authorized to grant letters of horning to enforce the execution of their sentences.†

A few months afterwards, the king gave completeness to this measure by erecting two courts of High Commission—one in each archbishopric. Henry VIII. of England had been the first to institute such a court, for the execution of his tyrannical caprices. Elizabeth had continued it, and made it the minister of her cruelty against the Puritans. James early perceived its capabilities for dealing with the Puritans of the north, and had two twigs from the parent stock transplanted to Scotland, where they took root and flourished vigorously. Each court consisted of the archbishop, his suffragan bishops, and a number of the nobility.‡ The archbishop and four coadjutors, lay or clerical, consti-

* Ecclesiastical Records of Aberdeen, pp. 63, 116, Spalding Club. The notices referred to belong to the years 1608 and 1651.

† James VI., parl. xx. chap. vi.

‡ The two courts were subsequently merged in one.

tuted a quorum; they could call any one before them whom they were pleased to think scandalous in life or erroneous in religion; they could impose any fine; they could imprison for any period; they could depose any minister; they could pronounce sentence of excommunication against any subject of the realm, and see it followed by its proper effects. In all this they were bound by no law but their own discretion. They were subject to no appeal—their sentence was final. Such courts, possessing such unlimited jurisdiction over the goods, and liberties, and consciences of men, rested upon no act of parliament—they were called into existence by a royal proclamation.* They were creatures of the prerogative. They were created to do a certain kind of work, and they did it well. They associated with the name of bishop everything that was odious in despotism, and slowly accumulated against the house of Stewart the lamentation and woes which befell it in the ages to come.

A royal proclamation was deemed enough to constitute these Courts of High Commission; but an act of parliament was thought necessary to determine the proper colour and cut of a judge's and a clergyman's coat! A statute was framed, proceeding on the ludicrous preamble, that it had been found by daily experience that the greatness of his Majesty's empire, the magnificence of his court, the fame of his wisdom, the civility of his subjects, were alluring princes and strangers from every part of the world, and that it was fitting that bishops and ministers, judges and magistrates, should appear before these in becoming apparel. It was therefore referred to his Majesty's serene wisdom to devise appropriate garments and robes of office for these different functionaries.† Valiant colonels have condescended to act as clothiers to their regiments; this famous monarch was constituted by act of parliament tailor to the Court of Session and the Church! Spottiswood informs us that shortly afterwards the *modes* were sent down from London;‡ and Calderwood describes them.§ The Senators of the

* A copy of the royal commission is given in Calderwood, vol. vii. pp. 57, 58.

† James VI., parl. xx. chap. viii.

‡ History, lib. vii.

§ History, vol. vii. p. 54.

College of Justice were to have purple gowns; the advocates, clerks, and scribes, black gowns. The ministers were to wear black clothes, and in the pulpit black gowns; the bishops and doctors of divinity, black stockings to the knee, black gowns, and a black crape about their neck. On the 15th of February 1610, the Lords of Session and bishops put on their new robes of office, and walked in procession from the Chancellor's house to the Tolbooth, the beheld of all beholders.*

A.D. 1610. There is now little to record but the successive steps by which Episcopacy was forced upon the nation. On the 1st of April 1610, the king directed missives from Whitehall, appointing a General Assembly to be held at Glasgow on the 8th of June. In these missives he says enough to convince us that the Scotch ministers were still as bullocks unaccustomed to the yoke; he was no way "assured of their peaceful inclinations." He therefore informed the presbyteries that the Archbishop of St Andrews would advertise them of the members he wished sent to his Assembly;† which the archbishop accordingly did, expressing a hope to some of the presbyteries that they would not be refractory to reasonable petitions.‡ On the appointed day, thirteen bishops, thirteen noblemen, forty barons, and upwards of a hundred ministers met; and the Earl of Dunbar appeared as the Royal Commissioner. The first day was kept as a fast, which, says the historian of Presbytery, was like the fast that was called when Naboth's vineyard was taken from him.§ One of the characteristics of this Assembly, and of all the Assemblies of the period, was, that no controverted question was openly discussed, but settled at a private conference, and the result presented to the Assembly to be registered. In this way the following propositions were agreed upon:—

1. That the calling General Assemblies belonged to his Majesty; and, consequently, that the meeting at Aberdeen

* Calderwood's History, vol. vii. p. 55.

† The royal missive is copied in Calderwood's History, vol. vii. pp. 92, 93.

‡ Archbishop of St Andrews to the Presbytery of Chirnside. (Calderwood, vol. vii. pp. 91, 92.)

§ Calderwood's History, vol. vii. p. 94.

in 1605 was null and void; but that an Assembly should be held every year.

2. That synods should be held in every diocese twice in the year, in which the archbishop or bishop of the diocese should preside.

3. That no sentence of excommunication or absolution should be pronounced without the approbation of the bishop of the diocese.

4. That all presentations in time coming should be directed to the archbishop or bishop of the diocese where the vacant benefice lay; and that he, if he found the presentee qualified, should take the assistance of the ministers of the district, and perfect the act of ordination.

5. That in the deposition of ministers, the bishop should associate with himself the ministers of the bounds within which the delinquent officiated, and, after trial of the fact, pronounce sentence.

6. That every minister at his admission should swear obedience to his Majesty and his Ordinary.

7. That the bishops should visit their dioceses themselves, unless the bounds were too great; in which case they might appoint a substitute.

8. That exercise of doctrine should be continued weekly among the ministers at the time of their accustomed meetings, and that the bishop or his deputy should be moderator.

9. That the bishops should be subject in all things to the censure of the General Assembly, and being found culpable, might, with his Majesty's consent, be deprived.

10. That no one should be elected as a bishop under forty years of age, and who had not actually taught as a minister for ten years.

Lastly, That no minister, in the pulpit or the public exercise, should argue against or disobey the acts of this Assembly, under the pain of deprivation; and, particularly, that no one should discuss in the pulpit the parity or imparity of ministers.*

It is certain that considerable sums of money were dis-

* Spottiswood's History, lib. vii. Calderwood, vol. vii. pp. 99–103. Spottiswood curtails the resolutions. Calderwood gives them in full.

tributed among the members of this Assembly, which had thus remorselessly overturned the Presbyterian polity of the Church. Calderwood affirms that it was given in payment of votes, though under the name of defraying travelling expenses ;* Spottiswood declares that it was given only as the payment of the stipulated salaries of the permanent moderators.† However this may be, the last resolution abundantly shows that the Assembly had ventured to fly in the face of the Church and of the nation. But notwithstanding the terrors of deposition, many ministers ventured to speak out; and this led the Privy Council to issue a proclamation forbidding any one to impugn, deprave, contradict, condemn, or utter his disallowance or dislike of any point or article of the most grave and wise conclusions of that Assembly. But neither king nor Council could altogether repress the free utterance of indignant thought. When the main battle had given way, when the General Assembly allowed itself to be led captive, the Church still carried on a guerilla warfare against despotism and Episcopacy in its inferior courts.

The Marquis of Huntly and the Earls of Angus and Errol were lying in different prisons on account of their apostacy to Rome. They presented a supplication to this Assembly, offering to subscribe the Confession of Faith, and do anything that was required of them. After a conference with three bishops, and a probation of six months, the Marquis was set at liberty, and allowed to return to Strathbogie. The Earl of Angus, upon reconsidering the matter, resolved to abandon his country rather than his creed, and found in France that liberty of religious worship which was denied him in Scotland. At a meeting of the Council in the Castle of Edinburgh, the Earl of Errol had professed his conformity with the dominant faith, and everything was ready for his reconciliation to the Church; but on that very night he was so smitten with remorse that he was tempted to commit suicide, and sending for the Archbishop of Glasgow in the morning, he stated his unwillingness to subscribe to doctrines

* History, vol. vii. p. 97. † History, lib. vii. p. 513.

which he did not believe.* We may surely regret that such a tender conscience was made subject to such violence.

Scotland had now the species of bishops; but according to the Church notions which were in vogue, they were no better than images of clay, and required the Promethean fire to give them episcopal life. Soon after the dissolution of the Assembly, Spottiswood, Archbishop of Glasgow, Lamb, Bishop of Brechin, and Hamilton, Bishop of Galloway, set out for London. On their reception at court, the king explained to them that he had at his great charge recovered the bishoprics from the hands of those who had possessed them, and bestowed them upon men who, he hoped, would prove worthy of their places; but, as he could not make them bishops, as there were none in Scotland who could, and as they could not take that honour to themselves, he had sent for them to England, that they might be solemnly consecrated, and upon their return home bestow the spiritual gift upon others. Spottiswood ventured to suggest that this might give rise to the old jealousy of the Church of England's supremacy in Scotland; but James stated that he had provided against that, by arranging that consecration should be given to them neither by York nor Canterbury, but by the Bishops of London, Ely, and Bath. The Scots bishops thanked his Majesty for his care of their Church, and declared their willingness to submit; and, accordingly, the consecration was appointed to take place in the Chapel of London House on the 21st of October.†

In the meantime, the Bishop of Ely expressed his opinion that the Scotsmen must be made priests before they were consecrated bishops, as they were destitute of Episcopal ordination. This opinion, if carried out, would have required the re-ordination of every minister in Scotland, and, on the same principle, their being baptized anew; and it was scarcely deemed safe to ask them to bow their heads so low. Bancroft, the Archbishop of Canterbury, therefore argued, that there was no necessity for re-ordination; that seeing where no bishops could be had, ordination by presbyters must be deemed lawful, as otherwise it might be doubted if

* Spottiswood's History, lib. vii. p. 513. † Ibid. p. 514.

there were any lawful vocation in most of the Reformed Churches. Abbot, the Bishop of London, got rid of the difficulty in another way. He held that there was no necessity for passing the inferior orders of deacon and priest, but that the episcopal character might be conveyed at once, as appeared from the example of St Ambrose, Nectarius, Eucherius, and others, who from mere laymen were advanced at once into the episcopal chair. Ely yielded to the majority; and, accordingly, on the appointed day, Spottiswood, Lamb, and Hamilton were solemnly consecrated, and afterwards conveyed to Scotland the mystic virtues of the apostolical succession, which they transferred to their brethren by the laying on of their episcopal hands.*

A.D. 1612. Bishops had been recognised by the General Assembly, and they had now been made partakers of the episcopal character; but still they had no legal standing in the country, as the Act of 1592—the Magna Charta of Presbytery—stood unrepealed on the statute-book. This defect was now to be supplied. The parliament assembled in Edinburgh on the 16th of October 1612, and ratified all the acts which had been passed at the Assembly of 1610, with some alterations which tended to elevate the bishops still higher above their brethren in the ministry.† The Assembly and the parliament, in fact, at this period, were like the two parts of a well-balanced machine, and worked beautifully the one into the other. The Scottish nobility had yielded sooner than the Scottish ministry to courtly influences.

The contest was now over, and Episcopacy was victorious. The vehement debates in the Assembly, the bold defiances to the king, the free utterance of thought in the pulpit, was hushed, and there was a dead lull after the storm, broken only by the grumbling of some discontented synod or presbytery. But the fear of Popery had not yet died away. The adherents of Rome were still numerous and active; propagandists traversed the country in disguise; and many of the nominal Protestants were still unable entirely to divorce

* Spottiswood, lib. vii. Neal's History, vol. i. Calderwood, &c.

† James VI., parl. xxi. chap. i.

themselves from Roman feelings, opinions, and practices. The citizens of Glasgow were still under the impression that a crucifix painted in their house gave luck; limners were found to ply the unlawful trade, and the presbytery busied itself in hunting them out.* Sir John Knieland received a Jesuit into his house, and for this he was hauled before the court. He pled that the man had come in the garb of a soldier, and that he was unacquainted with his real character; but the fact of his not having communicated for three years was thought to throw strong suspicion on his statement.†

The truth is, the popular mind was by no means purged of Popery. The people in many districts still clung to old religious customs, which had become intertwined with their social and domestic habits. On Midsummer Eve they persisted in kindling bonfires, and the fines of the magistrates did not deter them.‡ At Yule, and on New-Year's Day, frolicsome women clothed themselves in male attire, and as guisers visited the houses of their neighbours and friends.§ Persons professing Protestantism still undertook pilgrimages, and thought they derived benefit from washing themselves in sacred wells. The Sabbath was still in many places desecrated by markets, by fishing, by the operations of husbandry. But stricter notions were gradually growing up. Fines were levied upon persons who absented themselves from church. Eavesdroppers were employed to go about the streets, and pick up all whom they chanced to overhear swearing; and such defaulters, being brought before the magistrates, were punished by palmies.‖

A.D. 1614. Toward the end of the year 1614, a Jesuit named Ogilvy was apprehended at Glasgow.

* Records of Presbytery of Glasgow, 8th July 1612, and 20th April 1614. Appendix to Papers Illustrative of Queen Mary and King James, Bannatyne Club Ed.

† Records of Presbytery of Glasgow, 1st February 1615.

‡ Ecclesiastical Records of Aberdeen, p. 61, anno 1608, published by the Spalding Club.

§ Ibid. p. 50, anno 1606. In Perthshire, "guisers" still go about visiting houses on the last night of the year; and I suppose it is so in other districts of Scotland.

‖ Ibid.

There were found in his custody three little books, with directions for receiving confessions, a warrant to grant dispensations to those who possessed Church-livings, a few reliques, and a tuft of St Ignatius's hair, which he held in the utmost veneration. When put upon his trial, he declared that he had come into Scotland to save souls, but refused to give any information which might criminate others. The judicial procedure of most countries at that period was disgraced by barbarous customs; and this poor man was kept from sleeping for several successive nights together, that this slow and exquisite torture might lead him to speak out; and in the half-delirious state which was thus induced, he began to let his secrets escape; but his nerves were no sooner restored by rest, than he denied everything he had said. All this was reported to the king, and torture was suggested; but James humanely forbade it, and directed that if it should be found that Ogilvy was merely a Jesuit, and had said mass, he should be banished; but that if he held the supremacy of the Pope over kings, the law should be allowed to take its course. James was more jealous for himself than his God. Ogilvy returned guarded answers to the sifting questions which were sent down from London to be put to him; but as he declared his belief that the Pope had jurisdiction over his Majesty, and over all Christian kings, in spiritual affairs, for that he was hanged in the High Street of Glasgow.* Thus the metropolis of the west has martyrs which she wots not of. Protestant zeal went still further, and reached the unhappy Jesuit's friends. A citizen was brought before the presbytery for having harboured him, and was glad to make his peace by appearing for three successive Sabbaths at the door of the High Church, clothed in linen, with bare head, giving tokens of repentance, and craving the prayers of the people.†

A.D. 1616. Two years subsequent to this the Marquis of Huntly was again convicted of having apostatized, and, what is more, of having prevented his tenants

* Spottiswood's History, lib. vii. Calderwood, vol. vii. pp. 193–96.

† Records of the Presbytery of Glasgow, March 1615. Papers Illustrative of Queen Mary and King James, Bannatyne Club Ed.

from going to church. On a warrant from the Court of High Commission, he was committed to the Castle of Edinburgh, but in a few days was liberated by a warrant from the chancellor. The bishops loudly complained of this infringement upon their jurisdiction; but Huntly was already on his way to London, and found means to get access to the king, by whom it was arranged, with the consent of the Bishop of Caithness, who happened to be at court, that he should be absolved by the Archbishop of Canterbury. The Primate of all England intimated what had been done to the Primate of Scotland, but it was felt to be an encroachment upon the Scottish Church; and it was therefore agreed that the Marquis should present a supplication to the General Assembly and be absolved anew, which was accordingly done.*

At Aberdeen, on the 13th of August, the Assembly met. The primate, without any election, took possession of the moderator's chair. "A number of lords and barons," says Calderwood, "decored the Assembly with silks and satins, but without any commission to vote."† As usual, a number of acts were passed against the Papists. To have an *Agnus Dei*, a rosary, a cross, or a crucifix, about the person, in the house, or inscribed on any book, was declared to be tantamount to apostasy. To make a pilgrimage to a chapel or well exposed the pilgrim to the terrors of the High Commission. No man might act as an apothecary, or practise physic, without being first examined as to his orthodoxy, as it had been found that Jesuits were carrying on their proselytizing practices under the cloak of these professions. This Assembly, moreover, projected a new Confession of Faith, a new Catechism, a new Liturgy, and ordained every minister to keep a record of the baptisms, marriages, and deaths in his parish; and all this it did at the special bidding of the king.‡

When James went to England to take possession of his

* Spottiswood's History, lib. vii. Calderwood, vol. vii.

† History, vol. vii. p. 223.

‡ Calderwood's History, vol. vii. pp. 229–31. Original Letters relating to Ecclesiastical Affairs, 1609–25. "Instructions to our Right Trusty and Well-Beloved Cousin and Councillor, the Earl of Montrose." (Published by the Ban. Club.)

new crown, he promised to visit his native country every three years. Thirteen years had elapsed, and still he had not come; but now he sent a letter to the Council to assure them of his coming, which he declared "proceeded of a longing to see the place of his breeding—a salmon-like instinct."* About the same time a proclamation was issued by the Privy Council, commanding that cattle should everywhere be fed, that there might be enough of beef in the country when the king came.† But preparations of another and more ominous kind were begun in the Chapel at Holyrood House. A company of English carpenters were sent to refit it after the pattern which they had seen in the south. Organs were disembarked at Leith; gilded statues of the evangelists and apostles came next to be set up in the stalls; and the populace began to say, that in a church with organs and images a mass might be expected. The bishops thought it right to advertise his Majesty of the state of public feeling,‡ but his Majesty was wroth, and told them that they could not distinguish between pictures intended for ornament and images erected for worship. He likened them to the Constable of Castile, who, having come to London to conclude a peace between England and Spain, when he understood the ceremony was to take place in a chapel, and that some anthems were to be sung, desired that whatever was sung God's name might not be used, and that being promised, he was content they should sing what they listed. Just so, said the king, you can endure lions, dragons, and devils to be figured in your churches, but you will not allow the patriarchs and apostles. Notwithstanding this scold, the king said the statues would not be set up, as there was not now time for it.§

On Friday, the 16th of May 1617, James re-entered his ancient capital, and was received as Scotland has ever received her kings, even when they hardly deserved her wel-

* Spottiswood, lib. vii. p. 529. † Calderwood's History, vol. vii.

† The Bishop of Galloway was Dean of the Chapel Royal, and penned this letter, getting the signatures of St Andrews, Aberdeen, Brechin, &c.

§ Letter, The King to the Ministers of Edinburgh, 23d March 1617. (Published, among Original Letters relating to Ecclesiastical Affairs, by the Bannatyne Club.) Spottiswood relates the circumstance in his History, and this letter proves his accuracy. The letter is very characteristic of James.

come. He repaid their loyalty by insulting their religion. On the very day after his arrival, the Anglican service was begun in the Chapel Royal. There were bishops in surplices, choristers singing, an organ pealing forth its notes. Upon the 8th of June the Privy Councillors, bishops, and nobles who were in Edinburgh, were commanded to repair to Holyrood, where the communion was to be celebrated after the English form. Many went, and, to humour the king, violated the order of their Church, and received the sacrament kneeling. A few hung back, and these were specially noted by the proselytizing monarch, and ordered to prepare themselves for the solemnity against the ensuing Sabbath.*

On the 28th of June the parliament assembled. His Majesty, as of yore, made a speech in praise of his own good intentions; the chancellor also made a speech, and then the Lords of the Articles were chosen, not without some altercation, and not entirely to the king's satisfaction.† The legislation to which the Estates first addressed themselves affected the Church: they passed an act regarding the election of bishops; another regarding the restitution of cathedral chapters; and a third, and most salutary one, regarding the plantation of churches, and the provision of stipends for their ministers.‡ But it began to be mooted abroad that the king had submitted to the Lords of the Articles a proposition, which, if passed into a law, would be tantamount to the abolition of General Assemblies. The proposition was,— "That whatsoever his Majesty should determine touching

* Calderwood's History, vol. viii. pp. 246, 247. The same forms were observed in the Chapel Royal after the king's return to the south. In 1618 the Bishop of Galloway wrote to James:—"As your Highness commands, so have I done. On the passion and resurrection days, I ministered the communion, kneeling, to my Lord Chancellor, Secretary, Register, Advocate, and Treasury-Depute, and the Laird of Ruthven. My Lord of Mar had communicated on the day before. I required others when the lords had risen, and attended them at leisure, but no more presented themselves to the table. Many told me after that they were minded to communicate, but they stood every one on the coming of others." The bishop goes on to suggest that at Pentecost the lords should be made to bring their servants with them, and also that all who lived in the palace should be brought to swell the number of communicants. Such shifts, how pitiful! (Original Letters, 1603–25, Ban. Ed.)

† Calderwood's History, vol. vii. p. 250.

‡ James VI., parl. xxii. chapters i., ii., iii.

the external government of the Church, with the advice of the archbishops, bishops, and a competent number of the clergy, should have the strength of a law." The king did not conceal that this was designed to supersede General Assemblies. "To have matters ruled as they have been," said he, "in your General Assemblies, I will never agree; for the bishops must rule the ministers, and the king both, in things indifferent, and not repugnant to the Word of God." The Lords gave their consent to the proposition.*

A large number of ministers were at this time in Edinburgh, drawn together from every part of the country. They met, and drew up a most respectful, but earnest, protest against the proposed measure, as subversive of a polity which they believed to be founded on the Word of God. Even the Bishop of Galloway appended his signature to it; and Hewat, one of the ministers of Edinburgh and Abbot of Crossraguel, undertook to present it. Proceeding to the palace, he there met with Spottiswood, now Archbishop of St Andrews; and in an altercation which took place between them, the copy which he had was torn. The king, learning what was passing, came out of his bedroom undressed; and Hewat, going down upon his knees, declared that, if the protestation were offensive to his Majesty, he would not present it in parliament.† The king was angry at the insolence of any set of men protesting against his sovereign wishes; but he was also frightened, though he did not confess his fear; and when the proposition came to be read over in the parliament to be passed into a law, he ordered the clerk to pass it over, remarking, by way of consoling himself, that he could do as much in virtue of his own prerogative, without asking the advice of any one.‡ He did not, however, forget the protesters. Hewat, and Simson, the minister of Dalkeith, whom he considered as ringleaders, were deprived of their offices, and cast into prison; and David Calderwood, the celebrated historian of the Church of Scotland, who had joined in the protest, and deferentially defended it in presence of the

* Spottiswood's History, lib. vii. p. 531.

† Spottiswood's History, lib. vii. pp. 531–33. Calderwood, vol. vii.

‡ Ibid.

king and the High Commission, was stripped of his ministry, and banished the kingdom.*

During his Majesty's progress to the south, he affected to discover that Puritan precision in the observance of the Sabbath was one of the causes why Papists refused to be converted. He therefore published his famous "Declaration to encourage Recreations and Sports on the Lord's Day." In this singular document it is declared to be his Majesty's pleasure that, after divine service, his good people should not be hindered from any such lawful recreations as dancing, archery, leaping, or vaulting, nor from having May-games, Whitsun-ales, morris-dances, and setting up May-poles; and that women should have liberty to carry rushes to the church to decorate it, according to their old custom. His Majesty, however, prohibited such unlawful sports on Sunday as bear-baiting, bull-baiting, interludes, and bowling; and declared that none should have the benefit of the act save those who had attended divine service in their parish church in the forenoon. This royal declaration was read in all the parish churches of Lancashire, which abounded with Papists; and it is said that it was to have been read in all the churches of the kingdom, had not Archbishop Abbot wisely opposed it. The news of it soon reached Scotland, and excited considerable apprehension lest the monarch, in his royal beneficence, might be inclined to extend such considerate indulgences to his northern subjects.†

The Church of Scotland was now nearly conformed to the Church of England in government, but not in worship; and the king had set his heart upon conformity in all things. The General Assembly of 1616 had resolved that the acts of former Assemblies should be collected, to assist the Church judicatories in the administration of discipline, only these were no longer to be called Acts of Assembly, but Canons of the Church.‡ His Majesty had proposed that to

* Calderwood's History, vol. vii.

† Neal's History of the Puritans, vol. i. Calderwood, &c.

‡ On the part of the king and his bishops, at this period, there was a pedantic aping of Roman and Anglican terms. The General Assembly was now a National Council; its acts were canons; Presbyterians were Puritans; parents in baptism were godfathers and godmothers, &c. (See Original Let-

these canons there should be added certain others of his own framing, touching the confirmation of children, the administration of baptism and the Lord's Supper in private, the reception of the communion kneeling, and the observance of holidays; but the bishops had urged upon him that it would be dangerous to introduce such innovations upon their own authority, as they had never been even mooted in the ecclesiastical courts.

During his visit to Scotland, James reverted to the subject in a meeting of the bishops and leading ministers at St Andrews. In a speech which he made to them, he extolled his care for the Church: he alluded to the wrongs which he had received at their hands: he expatiated upon his prerogative. "It is a power innated and a special prerogative," said the philosophic monarch, "which we that are Christian kings have, to order and dispose of external things in the policy of the Church, as we, by advice of our bishops, shall find most fitting; and for your approving or disapproving, deceive not yourselves, I will never regard it, unless you bring me a reason that I cannot answer." The bishops and clergy were overawed by these flashes of the prerogative, and, going down upon their knees, begged that they might be allowed a conference among themselves. When they returned they craved permission to hold a General Assembly, pledging themselves that everything the king desired would then be done. An Assembly was accordingly appointed to be held at St Andrews, upon the 25th of November.* How different this interview and those between the king and his clergy previous to his accession to the English throne! But all things were changed. The king was then weak, and now he was strong; the nobles were then independent, for they had little to lose and nothing to gain, but now they were crouching, for they were begging favours at

ters, &c., 1603–25, Ban. Ed.) On the part of some Aberdonians, there would appear to have been a desire to overdo Episcopacy. An order of the kirk-session was passed against children being brought to baptism with more than two godfathers, proceeding upon the narrative that even some *puir men* had brought ten or twelve. (Ecclesiastical Records of Aberdeen, p. 109, Spalding Club Ed.)

* Spottiswood's History, lib. vii.

the English court; the ministers were then bold, for they were not looking to bishoprics, and they knew that their voice was the voice of the people—now there was nothing for it but to go down upon their knees.

The 25th of November came, and the Assembly met; but notwithstanding the pledged honour of the bishops, it proved unmanageable. Some ministers pressed for delay that they might explain the proposed changes to the people; others, when they heard what was moving, quietly slipped away home, and nothing definite was done.* When his Majesty learned the result he was highly indignant; he wrote to the archbishops telling them he was now come to an age when he would not be content to be fed with broth, as one of their cloth was wont to say to him; he commanded them to keep Christmas, which was now approaching; and added in a postscript, that as the Scottish Church had so far contemned his clemency, they would know what it was to draw the anger of a king upon them.† This letter to the archbishops was accompanied by another to the Council, prohibiting the payment of stipends to any of the rebellious ministers till they had shown their willingness to conform—a mean, most unjustifiable, and most arbitrary expedient to extort compliance from poverty.

Notwithstanding this failure, it was resolved that another trial should be made, and accordingly an Assembly was indicted to meet at Perth on the 25th of August 1618. The Archbishop of St Andrews made sure of his purpose this time by canvassing the members previous to the meeting, and making the modification of their stipends tell upon their votes, so that beforehand he knew what would be the suffrage of almost every man. Lord Binning, Lord Scone, and Lord Carnegie appeared as his Majesty's Commissioners. A considerable number of the nobility presented themselves furnished with missives by his Majesty, authorizing them to vote. The archbishop assumed the chair as his right. In the Little Church, where the Assembly met, there were set

* Spottiswood's History, lib. vii.

† Letter, the King to Archbishop Spottiswood, 6th December 1617, published among Original Letters relating to Ecclesiastical Affairs, 1603–25, Ban. Club. Spottiswood refers to this letter in his History.

a long table, and at the head of it a short cross one. At this cross table his Majesty's Commissioners and the Moderator took their seats upon chairs provided for them. At the sides of the long table were set forms for the noblemen, barons, burgesses, bishops, and doctors. The ministers were left to stand behind and look on, while the business was settled by the dignified conclave around the table.*

The king's letter was twice read over, and we are at a loss whether to marvel most at its insolence or its absurdity. It declares it was his Majesty's intention never to have called an Assembly more, and that it was only out of his great condescension he had deigned to call this one; he alluded to the desire of some to have all ecclesiastical matters arranged at ecclesiastical meetings, but he declared that he had the power, if he had the will, to determine all such subjects himself, without consulting them at all; he acknowledged that he did not like to remember the treatment he had received from the Scottish ministers in his youth, but piously remarked that the love of God and His truth had always upheld him, and that so they would to the end of his life; he reprimanded them for their obstinacy, and upbraided them for their ingratitude in not acknowledging the blessing of having such a loving and such a religious king to reign over them.† The archbishop followed up this letter with a speech, in which he protested that the Five Articles to be proposed to them were none of his; that they were wholly of the king's devising; but still he strongly urged the Assembly to give them its concurrence. Dr Young, the Dean of Winchester, who had brought down the royal letter, next made a speech, in which he spoke of his Majesty's wrath as already kindled, and as ready to burst forth and consume everything, unless it were quenched by the submission of this Assembly.‡

The Presbyterian party had mustered so strong that the Royal Commissioners were at first extremely doubtful of the result. The town was crowded with men from Fife of the

* Calderwood's History, vol. vii.

† A copy of the royal epistle will be found in Calderwood, vol. vii.

‡ Spottiswood, lib. vii. Calderwood, vol. vii.

Melville stamp.* An effort was made to have every subject discussed in open Assembly; but the contrary was carried, and the Five Articles were referred to a committee of the House, where every one of them was keenly debated; but in the end, every one of them was recommended. Upon Wednesday, the 27th of August, the report of the committee was brought up for approval, and the debate was renewed, but conscience was brow-beat by authority, and country ministers were snubbed by insolent courtiers. Scot of Cupar and Carmichael led the opposition; but the representative of royalty put Carmichael down, and "in the end My Lord of St Andrews," so wrote Binning to the king, "cutting short their affected shifts, whereby they intended either to disappoint the matter or refer it to another meeting, ordained this proposition only to be voted, Whether the Assembly would obey your Majesty in admitting the Articles or refuse them?" Some members ventured to suggest that the Articles should be voted separately; but the archbishop told them that the king must have them all, or none. At length the vote was taken, after every one had been informed that his conduct would be specially reported to the king. Eighty-six, says Lord Binning, allowed the Articles; forty-nine refused; three did not vote. His Majesty's Commissioners, says David Calderwood, analyzing the vote; all the noblemen except Ochiltree; all the barons except Waughton, who went home; all the doctors except Dr Strang; all the burgesses and a number of the ministers, voted in the affirmative. One nobleman, one doctor, and forty-five ministers voted in the negative. "Albeit the contention was vehement," wrote Lord Binning to his royal master, "both in the conference and public Assembly; yet after the Articles were voted, there appeared great contentment in many good men's faces."† Without believing this,

* Lord Binning wrote to the king, that on coming to town he found that so many presbyteries, especially those of Fife and the Lothians, had sent such precise and wilful Puritans, that he was extremely doubtful of the issue. (Letter, 27th August 1618.)

† Letter, Lord Binning to King James, St Johnstones, 27th August (at night) 1618—(the very night of the day on which the Five Articles were carried). Original Letters, &c., Ban. Ed. In this most interesting document, in which the Commissioner hastens to inform the king of what had taken place at the

we may believe that there would at least be a feeling of relief, after the state of violent tension in which men's minds had for some time been kept.

The following Five Articles now formed part of the ecclesiastical law of the land:—1. That the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ should be received kneeling. 2. That it might be administered in private to the sick. 3. That baptism might be administered at home when the infant could not conveniently be brought to the Church. 4. That all children of eight years of age should be brought to the bishop on his visitation, to be questioned as to their knowledge, and to receive his blessing. 5. That the days commemorative of Christ's birth, passion, resurrection, and ascension, and of the Holy Ghost's descent, should be devoutly observed.*

Assembly at Perth, we have some particulars, fully bearing out the assertion of Calderwood and other historians, that everything was carried by violence and intimidation. There is also still extant a letter from Spottiswood to John Murray of Lochmaben, dated 2d September 1618, in which he says, "I advertised you, by a short ticket from Perth, that the business had proceeded well and happily, which was there to be done, far against the expectation of all our adversaries, who thought they were above us in number and strength. Many of the noblemen and gentlemen his Majesty sent letters to, for assisting the service, came not, excusing themselves by sickness and ill disposition; but I think their minds were more sick than their bodies, and are so still." The archbishop goes on to say that absentees should be noted, and such as came specially thanked by the king, and that to this end he had given a memorandum to the Dean of Winchester.

* The following are the Five Articles, as given at length by Spottiswood:—

"1. Seeing we are commanded by God Himself, that when we come to worship Him, we fall down and kneel before the Lord our Maker, and considering withal that there is no part of divine worship more heavenly and spiritual than is the holy receiving of the blessed body and blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, like as the most humble and reverend gesture of our body in our meditation and the lifting up of our hearts best becometh so divine and sacred an action; therefore, notwithstanding that our Church has used, since the Reformation of religion, to celebrate the Holy Communion to the people sitting, by reason of the great abuse of kneeling used in the idolatrous worship of the sacrament by the Papists; yet, seeing all memory of bygone superstition is past, in reverence of God, and in due regard of so divine a mystery, and in remembrance of so mystical a union as we are made partakers of, the Assembly thinketh good that the blessed sacrament be celebrated hereafter meekly and reverently upon their knees.

"2. If any good Christian, visited with long sickness, and known to the pastor, by reason of his present infirmity, be unable to resort to the church for receiving the Holy Communion; or, being sick, shall declare to the pastor

The king had carried his point. He had set himself up

upon his conscience, that he thinks his sickness to be deadly, and shall earnestly desire to receive the same in his house, the minister shall not deny him so great a comfort, lawful warning being given to him the night before; and that there be three or four of good religion and conversation, free of all lawful impediments, present with the sick person to communicate with him, who must also provide a convenient place in his house, and all things necessary for the reverent administration thereof, according to the order prescribed in the Church.

"3. The minister shall often admonish the people that they defer not the baptism of infants any longer than the next Lord's-day after the child is born, unless upon a great and reasonable cause, declared to the minister, and by him approved, the same be continued: as also they shall warn them, that without great cause they procure not their children to be baptized at home in their house; but when great need shall compel them to baptize in private houses (in which case the minister shall not refuse to do it, upon knowledge of the great need, and being timely required thereto), then baptism shall be administered after the same form as it should have been in the congregation: and the minister shall, the next Lord's-day after any such private baptism, declare in the church that the infant was so baptized, and therefore ought to be received as one of the true flock of Christ's fold.

"4. Forasmuch as one of the special means for staying the increase of Popery, and settling of true religion in the hearts of people, is, that a special care be taken of young children, their education, and how they are catechized, which in time of the primitive Church most carefully was attended, as being most profitable to cause young children in their tender years drink in the knowledge of God and His religion, but is now altogether neglected, in respect of the great abuse and errors which crept into the Popish Church, by making a sacrament of confirmation; therefore, that all superstitions built thereupon may be rescinded, and that the matter itself, being most necessary for the education of youth, may be reduced to the primitive integrity, it is thought good that the minister in every parish should catechize all young children of eight years of age, and see that they have the knowledge, and be able to make rehearsal of the Lord's Prayer, Belief, and Ten Commandments, with answers to the questions of the Small Catechism used in our Church; and that every bishop in his visitation shall censure the minister who shall be found remiss therein; and the said bishops shall cause the said children to be presented before them, and bless them with prayer for the increase of their knowledge, and the continuance of God's heavenly graces with every one of them.

"5. As we abhor the superstitious observance of festival days by the Papists, and detest all licentious and profane abuses thereof by the common sort of professors, so we think that the inestimable benefits received from God by our Lord Jesus Christ, His birth, passion, resurrection, ascension, and sending down of the Holy Ghost, were commendably and godly remembered on certain particular days and times by the whole Church of the world, and may also be now; therefore the Assembly admitteth that every minister shall upon these days have the commemoration of the foresaid inestimable benefits, and make choice of several and pertinent texts of Scripture, and frame their doctrine and exhortation thereto, and rebuke all superstitious observation and licentious profanation thereof."

as a dictator in the Church, and the Church had yielded to his dictation. But the old Presbyterian spirit was not entirely extinct. Though trampled upon, it still burned. The ministers were ordered to read the Five Articles of Perth from their pulpits, but many of them refused. An act of the Privy Council was passed confirming the procedure of the Assembly, and enjoining compliance upon both ministers and people; and proclamation of this was made at the market-cross of Edinburgh; but already it began to be seen, that in cases like this, it is easier to make laws than to execute them.* When Christmas came round, many of the shopkeepers of Edinburgh kept their booths open, and were seen pacing in front of them, instead of repairing to church; for this they were summoned before the Court of High Commission.† When Easter approached it was the same. Some of the ministers resolved to comply with the court, and dispense the sacrament to kneeling communicants; others determined to resist. Crowds of people abandoned the churches where the new forms were introduced, and resorted to those where the simple Presbyterian ritual was preserved. Hundreds and thousands flocked out of the gates of Edinburgh, where the four ministers had succumbed on their way to the rural parishes, where they would receive the sacrament in the old way which they loved.‡ The provost of Edinburgh, a gentleman who had received the honour of knighthood on his Majesty's visit to his northern metropolis, absented himself from the church, to avoid taking the sacra-

* On the 28th of November, Lord Binning wrote to the king, that he had learned some of the ministers intended to disobey the Five Articles. On the 30th, the Archbishop of Glasgow addressed a letter to the Presbytery of Ayr, ordering them to preach on Christmas Day on some such subject as the nativity or incarnation, and hoping that none of them would be troublesome. Binning afterwards informed his Majesty, that the Ministers of Edinburgh had requested the Archbishop of St Andrews to come and occupy their pulpit on Christmas Day, but that he was not very willing to come. (Original Letters, &c., 1603–25, Ban. Club Ed.)

† Calderwood's History, vol. vii.

‡ Ibid. vol. vii. p. 359. The king, in a letter to his Scotch Privy Council, refers to the numbers who had fled from the town to the country churches. He alludes also to some pamphlets which had been published, and asks his Council to see these things punished. (Original Letters, &c., 1603–25, Ban. Ed.)

ment in a fashion which was odious to him. A Senator of the College of Justice was cited before the Commission for the same misdemeanour. Many of the elders and deacons refused to officiate. Of those of the laity who did come to church, some went down upon their knees as they received the consecrated elements; others refused; and not a few were seen to be in tears.* At a season so sacred, the slightest murmur breaking in upon the stillness of the heart's communion with its God is felt to be unpleasant; how much more the confusion and sadness of spirit which had been infused into the cup of communion which the Scottish Christians were required to drink. They must have eaten their passover with bitter herbs.

Nor did this occur only in one place, or on one occasion. The antipathy to the Anglican rites was almost universal among the people, and time did not diminish it. The terrors of the High Commission were employed to enforce submission, since argument had failed to carry persuasion; and during the whole subsequent reign of James, we are every now and then hearing of some recusant minister being dragged to its bar, deposed from his office, and cast into prison. The persecution began with Dickson, the minister of the west parish of Edinburgh; and many of his brethren afterwards exhibited the same steadfastness, and bore the same punishments. The public feeling found utterance in pamphlets and poems, which the government tried in vain to suppress. They were surreptitiously printed and dispersed among the people, who greedily read them.

* Calderwood's History, vol. vii. On the 16th March 1619, Lord Binning wrote to the king, giving his Majesty an account of the observance of Easter in Edinburgh. He states that letters had been written to all the Privy Councillors, Lords of Session, and magistrates, desiring them to come and walk in procession from the chancellor's lodging to the church. Some excused themselves by sickness, &c., but many came. The nobles, councillors, and sessioners came first to the Table, and, all upon their knees, received the elements from the ministers—Ramsay and Galloway—who gave them to each with their own hands. Their example, says Binning, was generally followed by the congregation, so that neither man nor woman, during the space of four hours, offered to receive the sacrament sitting, except one base fellow. It is plain Lord Binning puts the best face on the matter; he, however, mentions that many had gone to the country, especially women. (Original Letters, Ban. Club Ed.)

In July 1621, a parliament was called together, chiefly for the purpose of ratifying the Five Articles, which still wanted the sanction of law. A number of ministers assembled in Edinburgh to draw up a petition to be laid before it, but they were charged to leave the town; and every precaution was taken to prevent them from lodging a protest which they had prepared. The Articles were carried, but not without a struggle. Seventy-seven voted for them, fifty against them. A majority of the burghs were found in the opposition; the sheriffdoms were divided, and it was only by the votes of the bishops and higher nobility that the obnoxious acts were carried.*

The year 1618 witnessed not only the Assembly at Perth, which sanctioned the Five Articles, but the celebrated Synod of Dort, which condemned Arminianism, and declared Calvinism to be the doctrine of the Dutch Churches. In this ecclesiastical council there were present, not only Dutch and Walloon divines, but the representatives of almost every Reformed Church in Europe. Walter Balcanquhal was present as the representative of the Scotch Church; and of him it is recorded, that his apparel was decent, and that in all respects he gave much satisfaction.† The tenets of Arminius were reprobated in five different propositions, and, from this circumstance, it was reported among the common people of Scotland that the Hollanders had condemned the Five Articles of Perth.‡ The report was ridiculous as it was false; but even such a report is frequently an index of the state of feeling. King James was at first pleased with the decisions of the synod, but soon afterwards we find him bestowing his favours upon Arminian divines. The Scottish bishops are said to have been inoculated with the same opinions, which still further widened the gulph between them and the ministers who had, from the first planting of the Protestant Church, been strongly attached to the teaching of Augustine and Calvin.

In the few remaining years which fill up the reign of

* Calderwood's History, vol. vii.

† Neal's History of the Puritans, vol. i. pp. 479, 480.

‡ Spottiswood's History, lib. vii.

King James, there is little to record. The king and the Court of Commission persisted in enforcing obedience to their tyrannical decrees; and the ministers and people sullenly submitted, or continued to resist.

There is a story belonging to the year 1622, which deserves to be recorded, as interesting in itself, and as very descriptive of some of the chief actors in the period over which we have passed. Welsh had now been in banishment for upwards of sixteen years, during which time he had resided in France. His health began to fail, and in 1622 he ventured to come to London. His wife, the daughter of John Knox, managed to get access to court, to petition that her husband might be allowed to return to Scotland, and seek convalescence from his native air. His Majesty, upon her introduction, asked who was her father. "Mr Knox," she replied. "Knox and Welsh!" exclaimed the king; "the devil never made such a match as that." "It is very likely, sir," said she, "for we never speired (asked) his advice." The king next asked her how many children her father had left, and if they were lads or lasses. She said three, and that they were all lasses. "God be thanked," cried the king, lifting up both his hands, "for if they had been three lads, I had never bruiked my three kingdoms in peace." Mrs Welsh now took the opportunity of urging her petition that his Majesty would give her husband his native air. "Give him the devil!" said the king, coarsely. "Give that to your hungry courtiers," said the pious lady, rebuking his profanity. After some farther conversation, the king told her that if she would persuade her husband to submit to the bishops, he would allow him to return to Scotland. The heroic matron, the daughter of Knox, lifted up her apron, and holding it out toward the king, replied, "Please your Majesty, I'd rather kep (receive, keep from falling) his head there."* Her petition was refused, and Welsh soon afterwards died an exile in London.

Three years afterwards, James also died. In Scotland he was not greatly lamented, save by the bishops who had sprung up in the sunshine of his favour, and the few hungry

* M'Crie's Life of Knox.

nobles who haunted his court, grew rich upon English spoil, and brought upon their native country the reproach of beggary. He abandoned presbytery to overturn its government and persecute its ministers; he embraced prelacy to purge it from puritanism; and lost the esteem of one nation without gaining the respect of another. His foolish ideas of the divine right of kings, and of the extent of his prerogative, laid the foundation of those disasters which brought his son to the scaffold, and drove his race from the throne. English adulation, opulence, and power developed his vices, and choked up his virtues. His youth was more virtuous than his old age; and profligacy in the old is peculiarly repulsive. He grew fond of eating, drinking, and indolence; and licentious favourites ruled all. He was clever and learned for a king; sometimes he was witty; but he had little vigour or comprehensiveness of mind, and no true dignity of character. A foreign ambassador pronounced him "the wisest fool in Christendom." In regard to his appearance, we are told he was of the middle stature, without much of the king either in his countenance or gait; and he spoke as if his tongue were too large for his mouth. It was on the 27th of May 1625 that he died, being then in the 59th year of his age.

CHAPTER II.

CHARLES I. ascended the throne of Great Britain and Ireland amid the general acclamations of a people ever inclined to think hopefully of their hereditary kings. He was born at Dunfermline in the year 1600, was baptized by a Presbyterian minister, and entrusted to the care of Presbyterian tutors; but he was still a child when his father succeeded to the English crown, and placed him under men who taught him to abominate Presbytery as akin to democracy, and to cherish Episcopacy as the firmest ally of arbitrary power. Before his father's death, he sought in marriage the Infanta of Spain, and, in company with the Duke of Buckingham, made a romantic journey to Madrid, to claim and bring home his bride; but difficulties arose, and, to the joy of the nation, the match was broken off. Immediately upon his accession, he married Henrietta Maria, daughter of Henry IV., and sister of Louis XIII., kings of France—a lady of much beauty and vivacity, and destined to acquire a complete ascendency over her husband; but the marriage was regarded by many with alarm, as it was stipulated that the queen, with all the children of the marriage, and all her domestics, should be secured in the free exercise of the Roman Catholic religion; that she should have a bishop, invested with all necessary authority in things relating to religion, with twenty-eight priests or monks, and a chapel in every place where she should happen to reside; and that she should have the education of her children till they were thirteen years of age.*

* Stevenson's History of the Church and State of Scotland, vol. i. p. 8. Stevenson quotes Rapin, book xix. p. 233.

Charles was virtuous in his life, punctual in the discharge of his religious duties, possessed of good abilities, many accomplishments, a deep earnestness of character, and a dignity of demeanour becoming a king; but he soon showed that he had imbibed high notions of the royal prerogative—that he was fond of circumstance and ceremony in religious worship—that he hated puritanism—and did not feel himself bound to keep faith with his subjects. He was ruled by the Duke of Buckingham, till that haughty and unprincipled noble fell beneath the knife of an assassin; when the sprightly and intriguing queen succeeded to the influence which the favourite had possessed to the last, notwithstanding the impeachment of the parliament and the hatred of the people. Foolishly involved in a war, first with Spain, and afterwards with France, his Commons refused him such supplies as he required till he would redress their grievances, and give some secure resting-place to that spirit of liberty which was now abroad. Parliament after parliament was called, only to be dissolved; and the mortified king, baulked of his subsidies, was obliged to resort to forced loans from his subjects to meet the exigencies of the State. The elements of strife were already in existence; bishops were preaching about the divine right of kings and the duty of passive obedience; members of parliament were speaking about the liberties of the subject and the oppressions of the court; and it was becoming evident that a struggle between the old and the new ideas was at hand.

Soon after Charles had ascended the throne, and before his character was fully developed, the Scottish ministers despatched one of their number to court, with a petition to the effect, that they might be relieved from the observance of the Articles of Perth; but on the return of their messenger, they discovered that no relief need be looked for, and that the young king was resolved to pursue his father's policy.* Charles, however, was too much occupied with English affairs to be able to give much attention to Scotland, and the Church for several years enjoyed comparative quiet. No General Assembly had met since that disastrous

* Bishop Guthrie's Memoirs, p. 7.

one at Perth; but General Assemblies had not yet been legally abrogated. The bishops continued to exercise their Episcopal power, but they appear to have done it with moderation. Presbyteries were still held. The Anglican method of administering the sacrament was followed by some, and by others it was not. Thus, on Easter Day 1627, when the Communion was given in the High Church of Edinburgh, not more than six or seven persons kneeled, and even some of the ministers refrained from doing so themselves.* In February 1629, the ministers of Edinburgh again resolved to give the sacrament to the people, as they had not received it in the preceding year; "but it was given," says the historian, "with such confusion that it was pitiful to behold; some of the ministers kneeling, some sitting, some standing, and such confusion among the people also; the minister giving the elements out of his hands to each one, and the reader reading, or the people singing at the same time."† It was the same with the other Articles of Perth, which appear to have been like an apple of discord thrown into the midst of the Church. Thus, on Christmas Day, John Maxwell, who was aspiring to a bishopric, was preaching in Edinburgh, and thundering forth invectives and curses against such as would not keep the festivals of the Church; David Forrester was preaching in Leith on the same day, and maintaining the very opposite. "It was sad," says John Row, "to hear pulpit against pulpit; but we should bless the Lord that there were still some to stand in the gap, and speak for the truth and the cause of God."‡

In the year 1633 Charles visited his ancient kingdom of Scotland, to be crowned with the crown of his ancestors. On Saturday, the 15th of June, he entered Edinburgh in triumphal procession. In his train was Dr Laud, at that time Bishop of London, and soon afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury—a man violent, vain, superstitious, and whose whole ambition seems to have been to bring the Churches of Britain into closer conformity with the Church of Rome. Upon Sabbath he preached before the king and court in the Chapel of Holyrood House; he expatiated upon the benefits of

* Row's History, p. 343. † Ibid. p. 348. ‡ Ibid. p. 350.

conformity; he extolled the venerable ceremonies of the Anglican Church; and the nobles, knowing that the bishop only spoke the sentiments of the king, applauded what he said.* Tuesday, the 18th of the month, was fixed for the coronation. By the direction of Laud, an altar was erected in the Abbey Church, parallel to the mass altar, unlighted candles were placed upon it, and otherwise the building was magnificently adorned. The Bishop of Brechin preached the sermon, and the Archbishop of St Andrews placed the crown upon the king's head with the usual forms. Close by the side of the Archbishop of St Andrews the Archbishop of Glasgow had taken his place, as was his right; but Laud, observing that he did not wear the embroidered robe, which the High Church fashion required, thrust him aside, and put the Bishop of Ross in his stead.† In this little episode we have a prophetic revelation of the future primate's character and history.

On Sabbath, the 23rd of June, the king went to the High Church of Edinburgh to hear sermon. When he had taken his place in the loft, the reader, according to the usage then prevalent, began to read the lessons for the day, and sing the psalms preparatory to the sermon, but Maxwell, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, and recently made Bishop of Ross, requested him to leave his desk, and then substituted in his stead two English chaplains, clothed in surplices, who performed the English service. The service being ended, the Bishop of Moray, also clothed in a surplice, ascended the pulpit and preached.‡ The Scottish people bore these insults upon their established worship in no pleasant humour. The storm was slowly gathering, but it was not yet ready to burst.

The next day being St John the Baptist's Day, his Majesty went in state to his chapel royal, and made a solemn offertory. The next scene was a characteristic one. About a hundred persons, afflicted with the king's evil, approached,

* Clarendon's History of the Rebellion, vol. i. p. 64.

† Neal's History of the Puritans, vol. i. p. 562. Rushworth's Collections part ii. p. 182.

‡ Row's History, p. 363.

one after another, to his Majesty, and received his healing touch, and at the same time had a piece of gold, coined for the purpose, and suspended by a white riband, put round their necks by the royal hands in commemoration of their cure.* So the time passed, amid religious pageants, costly banquets, excursions to the provinces, and bestowal of titles of honour. These last were given with no niggard hand, and yet many expectants were disappointed. During his stay in the country, his Majesty created one marquis, ten earls, two viscounts, eight lords, and dubbed fifty-four knights;† thus plenteously did the fountain of honour overflow. Edinburgh he erected into a bishopric; appointed St Gile's to be its cathedral church; and gave pain to the lovers of Presbyterian preaching, by ordering the partitions which had been thrown up to be taken down, that the building might wear a cathedral-like aspect, and be fit for the cathedral service.‡

But we have still to record the most important event connected with his Majesty's visit to the north—the meeting of parliament. It was on the 19th of June that the Estates assembled. On the first day the Lords of the Articles were chosen, and continued their labours for more than a week, and certainly they could not have been idle, for they gave their sanction to one hundred and seventy-six acts of a private nature, and to thirty-one relating to public affairs.§ On the 28th, the parliament met to give its stamp of approbation to the labours of its committee. When the acts were read over there were two which were seen to be destructive of the last traces of presbytery, and which met with a determined opposition.‖

* Balfour's Annals, vol. ii. p. 201. Large Declaration, p. 11.

† Balfour, vol. ii. p. 202.

‡ Row's History, p. 369. Stevenson's History, vol. i. p. 121.

§ Murray's Collection of the Acts of the Scottish Parliament.

‖ They were couched as follow:—Our sovereign lord, with advice, consent, and assent of the whole Estates, acknowledging his Majesty's sovereign authority, princely power, royal prerogative, and privilege of his crown, over all estates, persons, and causes within this kingdom, ratifies and approves the Act of Parliament made in the year 1606, anent the king's royal prerogative, and perpetually confirms the same for his Highness, his heirs and successors, as amply, absolutely, and freely, in all respects, as ever any of his Majesty's royal progenitors

The first of these was a combination of two acts passed in the reign of King James, the one extending his prerogative to all causes, spiritual as well as political, and the other giving him power to prescribe the apparel of Churchmen; the second was the virtual ratification of the Episcopal government and worship, as it then existed in Scotland. Contrary to what we would imagine, the reluctance was greatest to continue to Charles the power which had been given to James to determine the clerical costumes. Lord Rothes, who led the opposition, said he could consent to the first part of the act, but not to the second. He was told it must be passed as a whole, or not at all. People declared that the device was like to that of the Roman emperors, who placed a statue of some heathen divinity near to the statue of themselves, that the early Christians, in paying obeisance to the one, might be entrapped into an act of homage to the other.* The truth is, there was a well-grounded alarm that Laud wished to introduce the surplice, and all those other sacerdotal vestments which, in the minds of the Scottish people, were inseparably joined with the Popish worship. When the vote was taken, the king supplied himself with a roll of the members and a pen, and marked the suffrage of every individual, which had its effect upon the timid and time-serving, but was felt to be unworthy of a king presiding in his parliament. The clerk-register declared the acts to be carried. Rothes stood up and declared the vote to be otherwise. The king interfered, and said, that to corrupt the

did possess and exercise the same. And withal remembering, that in the Act of Parliament made in the year 1609, anent the apparel of judges, magistrates, and kirkmen, it was agreed, that what order soever his Majesty's father of blessed memory should prescribe for the apparel of kirkmen, and send in write to his Clerk of Register, should be a sufficient warrant for inserting the same in the books of parliament, to have the strength of an act thereof, have all consented that the same power shall remain with the person of our sovereign lord and his successors that now is; and with the same clause for execution thereof, as in the said act is contained.

Our sovereign lord, with advice and consent of the Estates, ratifies and approves all and whatsoever acts and statutes made before, anent the liberty and freedom of the true Kirk of God and religion, presently professed within this realm. And ordains the same to stand in their full force and effect, as if they were specially set down herein. (Charles I., parl. i. chapters iii. iv.)

* Kirkton's History, p. 29.

parliamentary records was high treason, and that therefore Lord Rothes must either be silent, or make good his charge at the peril of his life. The earl prudently declined to run such a hazard, and the matter is involved in mystery to this day.*

A number of ministers, when they heard that such acts were being prepared by the Lords of the Articles, drew up a statement of their grievances, to be laid before the parliament, but it was never allowed to see the light.† After the obnoxious measures were passed, some of the barons who had voted in the opposition prepared a most respectfully-worded supplication to be presented to his Majesty, explaining their conduct.‡ The Earl of Rothes showed a copy of the proposed supplication to the king at Dalkeith to see if it would be agreeable to him, but the king having glanced at it, returned it to the earl, saying, sharply, "No more of this, my lord, I command you."§ There was no more of it—the petition was suppressed. But about a year afterwards, when everybody had forgotten all about it, Lord Balmerino happened to show a copy of it, which he had lying beside him, to a Dundee writer, who was visiting at his house. The writer, unknown to Balmerino, took a copy of it, and showed it to Hay of Naughton; Hay of Naughton showed it to the Archbishop of St Andrews; the archbishop sent it to the king; and, for possessing such a document, Balmerino was summoned before a criminal court, indicted on an old statute against leasing; found guilty by a majority of one; condemned to death; and saved from the scaffold only by the clemency of the king, who probably felt that his execution would be no better than a murder.‖ The whole proceedings made a deep impression upon the public mind. It was another drop added to the cup of bitterness which was so soon to overflow.

* Row's History, p. 367. Large Declaration, published in the king's name, but known to be the production of Dr Balcanquhal, Dean of Durham, p. 12.

† Row, p. 357.

‡ Stevenson gives a copy of this document, vol. i. pp. 104–11. Row also gives it, pp. 376–81.

§ Guthrie's Memoirs, p. 9.

‖ Ibid. pp. 9, 10. Row, pp. 381–85.

But while we may blame the parliament of 1633 for bolstering up Episcopacy and arbitrary power, we should never forget that we owe to it the settlement of the vexatious tithe-question on the footing according to which all stipends are now paid, and the legal establishment of the parochial school system, which has conferred such inestimable blessings on the country. The Church of Scotland, in fact, owes to this parliament her stipends and her parish schools. We shall be pardoned for making a short digression on these two matters.

Soon after the Reformation, the Protestant Church claimed as her proper inheritance the whole lands and tithes of the Roman clergy, to be applied to the sustenance of preachers, the education of the young, and the support of the poor. This equitable claim was never conceded by a nobility anxious to appropriate to themselves the wealth of the hierarchy; but in 1561 it was arranged that the Papal incumbents should be allowed to retain two-thirds of their benefices for life, and that the remaining third should be appropriated partly for the support of the Protestant preachers, and partly to meet the necessities of an impoverished court. The commissioners appointed to allocate the stipends of the new ministers proved niggardly, and the small pittances which they assigned were so irregularly paid, that the Church, though wielding great power, was sunk in abject poverty. To rectify this grievance, often and loudly complained of by the General Assembly, the Regent Moray in his first parliament gave to the Church the power of appointing its own collectors of the thirds, made its claim prior to all others, and declared this was to endure only till the Church should come to its proper patrimony—the teinds. The finances of the ministers were considerably improved by this measure; but the Regent Morton, when he came into power, managed to persuade the Assembly to resign the collection of the thirds into his hands, with the promise that he would assign to every minister a sufficient stipend out of the tithes of his own parish—a thing most ardently desired; but the ministers soon found that they had been deceived, that their stipends were not improved, and that one minister

was frequently obliged to take the charge of four, five, or six parishes, assisted by readers paid at the rate of fifty or sixty merks. The avarice of Morton had done this, and it lost him the good-will of the Church, which might have served him in his hour of need.

Things remained long in this state: hundreds of parishes were unprovided with ministers, and hundreds of ministers were but poorly paid. The Assemblies were continually grumbling; the king was frequently promising; scheme of adjustment after scheme was proposed, but proposed only to be abandoned. Meantime, the recovery of the Church's patrimony was becoming every day more hopeless. The great majority of the parishes had been gifted in Roman Catholic times to the bishoprics and abbeys. As the Roman abbots died out, lay commendators were generally appointed in their stead, and many of these prevailed upon the king to convert their titles into heritable rights. After a time, when men's minds had got so accustomed to plunder that they could do it without a cloak, the decent form of appointing commendators was given up, and the king, in virtue of his royal right, and with reprehensible prodigality, gave large grants of the Church's revenues to his nobles. These lucky men were styled Lords of Erection. They generally received their grants under the burden of the thirds which had been appropriated to the ministers; but this specific burden was sometimes discharged on the vague condition that competent stipends should be provided out of the teinds for the ministers of the parishes out of which they were drawn, and sometimes on no condition at all.* We have seen how several of the bishoprics were held by courtiers, who drew their revenues, and employed a stipendiary tulchan to do the work.

In 1587 James VI., in order to replenish an impoverished exchequer, resolved to annex the lands of all ecclesiastical benefices to the Crown. This act extended only to the lands, and not to the tithes of the Church: it, moreover, reached only to the soil still in possession of the Church, and not to that which had already been gifted to laymen; but as none

* Connel on Tithes, vol. i. p. 182.

of the bishoprics had yet been erected into temporal lordships, and as many of the abbacies granted during the king's minority were only given during pleasure, the statute was felt to be very comprehensive in its sweep. The king afterwards regretted the passing of this act, as it opposed a barrier to the restoration of bishops, by depriving them of that wealth which becomes them so well. Bishops, however, were restored, and the Parliament House as well as the Church opened its doors for them; but notwithstanding the efforts and sacrifices of the king, and the rescission of the Act of Annexation, they were far from enjoying the ancient opulence of their order.

During all the struggles between Episcopacy and Presbytery, the ministers continued to be paid out of the thirds of benefices, and their stipends rose or fell according to the dispositions of the modificators. It was 1617 before any important change was effected. In this year a commission was issued by parliament for settling ministers' stipends, founded on a principle which had been proposed to the General Assembly in 1596. The act proceeds on the narrative, "That there be divers kirks within this kingdom not planted with ministers, on account of which ignorance and atheism abound among the people; and that many of those that are planted have no sufficient provision or maintenance appointed to them, whereby the ministry are kept in poverty and contempt, and cannot fruitfully travel in their charges." A mixed commission of prelates, nobles, barons, and burgesses was therefore named, with power "out of the teinds of every parish, to appoint and assign at their discretion a perpetual local stipend to the ministers present and to come." By this act the stipend of every minister was ordained to be paid, not out of a general fund as before, but out of the tithes of the parish where he laboured; the minimum stipend to be assigned was fixed at 5 chalders of victual, or 500 merks, and the maximum at 8 chalders, or 800 merks.*

* We have here a proof of how rapidly money had depreciated in Scotland. In 1560 the value of 5 chalders of victual was only about 100 merks; in 1617 it is 500. It is a symptom of the rapid improvement which had begun and was going on. At present the average value of 5 chalders of victual is upwards of 1500 merks.

This act was felt to be a step toward putting the stipends of the clergy on a proper footing.

Things continued in this state till Charles I. came to the throne in 1625. He found that, by the thoughtless prodigality of his father, almost the entire Church property of Scotland had been gifted away, and resolved to execute a revocation of all such grants, which he did in the very first year of his reign. Almost every noble family in Scotland had some share in the spoil; many of them had held it beyond the years of prescription; some of them if stripped of it would be left almost naked in the world, and therefore the king's design of wrenching it from them caused universal agitation and alarm, combined with a determination if possible to resist. To counterbalance this spirit, Charles attempted to interest the gentry and clergy in his project, by holding out to the former the right of purchasing and leading their own teinds; and to the latter, the prospect of more liberal stipends.

The king subsequently narrowed the wide range of his revocation, and then ordered a summons of reduction to be raised, as he conceived that the grants could be reduced upon legal grounds. Alarmed at this proceeding, a deputation of the titulars was sent to London, and had a conference with his Majesty. In consequence of the agreement then come to, the king, on the 7th of January 1627, issued a commission to the Lord Chancellor, the Lord High Treasurer, the two archbishops, eight bishops, twenty-two nobles, three law lords, seventeen barons, and ten burgesses, to treat with all who pretended a right to erected benefices for a surrender of these to the Crown, on such terms as the commissioners should suggest. This commission continued its sittings and its labours during the whole summer of that year; and, amongst other things, decided that all superiorities of erection should be resigned into his Majesty's hands, his Majesty being left to determine what composition should be paid for the rent of the superiorities; and it was farther agreed that this, and the questions which had arisen in regard to the valuation and sale of teinds, should be finally adjusted and determined by decreets-arbitral, pronounced by

the king, and proceeding upon submissions by all the parties concerned. Accordingly, in the course of the year 1628, submissions were given in by the Lords of Erection and the landholders, by the bishops and clergy, by the royal burghs having interest, and, last of all, by certain tacksmen and others having right to teinds.

Everything was now ripe for a decision, and accordingly, on the 2d of September 1629, his Majesty pronounced four decreets-arbitral, corresponding to the number of submissions. With regard to the superiorities of Church lands, it was ordained that 1000 merks Scots should be paid by the Crown for each chalder of victual feu-duty, and for each 100 merks of money feu-duty. With regard to teinds, the decreet declares, "that it is necessary and expedient for the public welfare and peace of this our ancient kingdom, and for the better providing of kirks and ministers' stipends, and for the establishing of schools and other pious uses, that each heritor have and enjoy his own teinds;" and in order to this, it is provided that all teinds should be valued and sold to those heritors who should choose to purchase them. The fifth of the rental of the land was declared to be the value of the teind;* and the price of teinds thus valued was fixed at nine years' purchase—a price which would be remarkably low now, but which probably was not so then.† It was farther provided, that in calculating the price of teinds, heritors were to pay for no more than what should remain after the ministers' stipends were deducted; and also that a certain portion of the rent or price, to be fixed by commissioners, should be set apart for the king in name of annuity.

In order to understand this arrangement, it must be remembered that teinds were originally levied out of the yearly produce of the farm. The parson, or his tacksman, went to the corn-field in harvest-time, and carried off every tenth

* When the teinds were drawn from the land separately, they were to be valued by a proof of the teind as drawn; but the fifth of the rental may be said to have been the general rule. (Connel, vol. i. p. 226.)

† The Commissioners on Teinds in their report give instances of land being sold at that period at nine years' purchase. Still it is a question often debated how far the sum fixed was a fair value for the teinds.

sheaf as his own. After the Reformation the lay titulars were found to be more rigorous in the exaction of tithes than their ecclesiastical predecessors, and their exaction was not so patiently borne. No victual could be taken from the field till it was first teinded; and a careless or ill-disposed titular or tacksman might let the crop rot in the stook before he appeared to claim his right, a grievance which was sorely felt, and only partially removed by statutes limiting the time for the removal of the teind. The land-owners were now to be enabled to rid themselves of this annoyance, by buying their own teinds, subject to the payment of such a stipend as should be granted to the minister.

The parliament of 1633 gave its sanction to these proceedings, and they became law. Sub-commissioners were soon at work in every presbytery over the country, and a considerable proportion of the teinds valued; but, strange to say, it was long before many of the proprietors availed themselves of the right to purchase. The minister of religion required no longer to haunt the harvest-field, and perhaps quarrel with the farmer about his teinding; nor to peep into the sheepcots, lest he should be cheated of his proportion of the lambs and the wool: the fifth part of the rental of the land was declared to be the value of the teind, and so much of this was assigned to the minister as the commissioners of teinds thought good. "By this mode," says Sir John Connel, "the clergy of Scotland, on the one hand, were in general secured in competent provisions; and on the other, there were preserved to land-holders the quiet possession of their property, the full benefit of their improvements, and the exclusive right to all future rises of rent."*

Thus far the Church of Scotland must honour Charles I. as a benefactor. But the arrangement, though beneficial for the Church, was not hailed with universal satisfaction. Many of the nobles surrendered their teinds with a grudge. It is said to have so embittered the minds of some as to have

* Connel's Treatise on Tithes, vol. i. p. 230. In the account here given of the teind system in Scotland, I have chiefly followed Connel in his Treatise on Tithes, and Forbes in his Treatise on Church Lands and Tithes. I have also consulted the ordinary historical authorities.

led them to take part in the troubles which followed, and that the deed of revocation was the root of the rebellion.* It is very probable that this is partly true, and we need not wonder at it. It would be the same now if those nobles who still hold ecclesiastical plunder were asked to surrender; it would make loyal men disloyal, peaceful men turbulent, it would almost make some men mad. We should rather blame the profuseness which gifted the property, than the tenacity which was unwilling to render it back again. That such passions should mingle in the strife we need not wonder; for the purest gold has ever an admixture of alloy, and the holiest of causes has frequently its sinful partisans.

We venture to make another digression in regard to the origin of our school-system, as it was the parliament of 1633 which first propped it up and strengthened it by statute. In Roman Catholic times, the means of education in our country were very scanty. The Universities of St Andrews, Glasgow, and Aberdeen had been established, grammar schools existed in some of the principal towns, and the convents were less or more nurseries of learning, but no provision had as yet been made for educating the bulk of the people. James IV. compelled all barons and freeholders to send their eldest sons to school, to be instructed in law, Latin, and the arts;† but it is certain that even such humble acquirements as reading and writing were rare among the masses. There is a shade of suspicion that even some of the clergy could not write, though, as a body, they were undoubtedly the best educated class of the community.‡ The Reformers showed their anxiety to extend education, by making that one of

* The king expressly affirms this in his Large Declaration, pp. 6–10; and Sir John Connel has an interesting note at p. 216 of his Treatise, referring to the same subject.

† James IV., parl. v. chap. liv.

‡ In the Records of the Kirk-session of St Andrews, which are coeval with the Reformation, we have the recantation of a great number of monks and others. Of the signatures attached to these recantations some are specially marked *proprio manu*, which gives rise to the suspicion that the other names were written by deputy. See Maitland Miscellany, vol. ii. One of the proclamations of the Lords of the Congregation regarding the use of the Prayer-Book of Edward VI., uses language which makes us marvel if it were possible there might be clerics who could not even read: they speak of those not quali-

the great objects to which they proposed the property of the Church should be consecrated. In the "First Book of Discipline" it was proposed that every church should have a school attached to it; that every notable town should have a college; and that the existing universities should be liberally endowed. The greed of the nobles prevented the scheme from being carried into effect, and with them rests the sin and the shame of keeping Scotland for many years longer in gross ignorance.

The grammar schools, which had been founded in papal days, still remained, and gave a good education to the upper classes; the universities struggled on amid many difficulties; but the readers seem to have been the only educators of the rural districts. These humble but useful men read the appointed lessons and prayers in the church upon the Sabbath; during the week, they instructed the children of the peasantry in the Catechism and the Bible; and thus picked up such a livelihood as they could. They are the first parents of our parish schoolmasters. In the "Diary" of James Melville, we have some most interesting notices of the school of Montrose, in which he was a scholar six years after the Reformation. "There," says he, "was a guid nomber of gentle and honest men's berns,* of the countrey about, weill treaned† upe, bathe in letters, godliness, and exerceise of honest geams.‡ There we lerned to reid the Catechisme, Prayers, and Scripture; to rehers the Catechisme and Prayers *par cœur;* also nottes of Scripture, efter the reiding therof." . . . "We lerned there the 'rudiments of the Latin grammair,' with the vocables in Latin and Frenche; also divers speitches in Frenche, with the reiding and right pronunciation of that toung. We proceidit fordar to the 'Etymologie' of Lilius and his 'Syntax,' as also a little of the 'Syntax' of Linacer; therewith was joyned Hunter's 'Nomenclatura,' the 'Minora Colloquia' of Erasmus, and sum of the 'Eclogs' of Virgill and 'Epistles'

fied to read the common prayers; but surely the inability referred to must have been a moral or religious, and not an intellectual one, or how could they have read, as they were required to do, their missals and breviaries.

* Bairns, children. † Well trained. ‡ Games.

of Horace; also Cicero, his 'Epistles *ad Terentiam.*'" It is refreshing to read that boys had their "rudiments" to learn, and their "Virgils" and "Ciceros" to read, then as now; and more refreshing still to know that they had their play too. "Ther also," continues Melville, "we haid the aire guid, and fields reasonable fear;* and be our maister war teached to handle the bow for archerie, the glub for goff, the batons for fencing; also to rin, to loop, to swoum, to warsell,† to prove pratteiks, everie ane haiffing‡ his matche and andagoniste bathe in our lessons and play. A happie and a golden tyme!" says the good man, as the dream of his school-boy days rose up before him.§

It would appear that music had been much cultivated up to this period, though now it was beginning to fall into neglect; but still there were many "sang schoolis" scattered over the country. That the first Reformers were anxious to encourage sacred music is evident from the fact that the first editions of the Scottish Liturgy have the Psalm-tunes then sung attached to the Psalms, and curiously reversed, so that two persons standing opposite to each other might sing from the same book. In the year 1579, King James had an act passed for instructing the youth in the art of singing and music, "quhilk is like to fall in great decay, without timous remeid be provided." "Our sovereign lord, therefore, with advice of his Three Estates of this present parliament, requests the provosts, bailies, councils, and communities of the most special burghs of the realm, and the patrons and provosts of the colleges where 'sang schools' are founded, to erect and set up a sang school, with a master sufficient and able for the instruction of the youth in the said science of music, as they will answer to his Highness, upon the peril of their foundations."‖ About the same date, we have, in the "Burgh Records of Glasgow," an entry for the rent of a room used as a "sang school;"¶ and in other

* Fair. † To run, leap, swim, wrestle. ‡ Having.

§ Melville's Diary, p. 14. ‖ James VI., parl. vi. chap. xcviii.

¶ Burgh Records of Glasgow, published in the Appendix to Papers Illustrative of Queen Mary and King James, Maitland Club. "1578.—For male of ane chalmer to be ane sang schole."

documents of that time, we have several scattered notices of a similar kind.

James Melville was something of a musician, and tells us that he acquired his knowledge of it at St Andrews, from a man who had been trained up among the monks in the abbey; that he learned from him the gammot, plain song and treble of the Psalms; that he loved singing and playing on instruments passing well; that he delighted to be present at the performances in the college; that some of his fellow-students played "fell weell" on the virginals, and others on the lute and githorn; and that the regent had a spinet in his room, to which he sometimes resorted, and played an accompaniment.* It was the Church that had fostered this pleasing art; and the daily cathedral service, the solemn chanting of the monks in their conventual buildings, and the way in which the Roman ritual had so beautifully blended music with almost every act of religious worship, diffused a love of it among the people. It is probable that some of those touchingly simple Scottish airs, of unknown antiquity, which give such perfect utterance to the finest feelings of the Scottish heart, may first have been sung by young men and maidens who learned from monks the concord of sweet sounds. After the Reformation, music decayed, though it had still its votaries, as it will have in all ages.

When we reach the beginning of the seventeenth century, we find that the Presbyterian clergy had done much for the establishment of schools, considering that they were without the means of endowing them. Thus, it appears from the report of a visitation of a number of parishes in the Diocese of St Andrews, in the years 1611 and 1613, that the following parishes were blessed with schools:—Tannadice, Fettercairn, Staybrock, Falkland, Forgan, Newburgh, Inverkeillor, Panbride, Kinfauns, Kinnaird, Inchture and Benvie, Mains and Strathmartine, Burntisland, Inneraritie and Mathie, and Errol. Those of Roscobie, Ferry-Port-on-Craig, St Vigeans, Kilspindie and Rait, Liff, Logie and

* Diary, p. 23.

Invergowrie, Muirhouse, and Monifieth, were still destitute of the means of education.

The parliament had confided to the Church the superintendence of schools, though it had denied it the means of endowing them; and, in the records of our Church Courts, there is evidence that the duty was not neglected. At the visitation of parishes by the presbyteries and provincial synods, the state of education was inquired into; the qualifications of the teachers were tried; and where there was no school, steps were sometimes taken for establishing one. The presbytery did not hesitate to tax every plough of land for the support of the schoolmaster. The kirk-session of Anstruther-Wester went farther, and made an order for every child in the town to attend school: if the rich refused, they were to be called before the session; if the poor refused, they were to be denied any charity. It was still further considerately provided, that the children of the poor were to be educated at the expense of the town, and that three hours every day were to be allowed them to go about and beg for their food.*

At length in 1616 the Privy Council put forth its authority to confer upon the country the blessing of education, and by an act declared, "That in every parish in this kingdom, where convenient means may be had for entertaining a school, a school shall be established, and a fit person appointed to teach the same, upon the expense of the parishioners, according to the quality and quantity of the parish;" that this was to be done at the sight and by the advice of the bishops; and, accordingly, "that they and every one of them deal and travel with the parishioners of the particular parishes within their particular dioceses, to condescend and agree upon some certain, solid, and sure course how and by what means the said school might be entertained."

The act of the Council does not seem to have been rigorously followed up by the bishops; for ten years afterwards a proclamation was made, ordering all ministers, with the assistance of two or three of their most intelligent parish-

* Appendix to Dr M'Crie's Life of Melville.

ioners, to report as to the state of their parishes,* and from the returns which have been preserved, and are now published by the Maitland Club, the condition of education appears in even a worse light than in the documents to which we have already referred. The great majority of the parishes are reported as having no school. Bonckill and Preston had 500 communicants, but no school nor foundation for one. Coldstream had 800 communicants, but no school nor foundation; and there was a melancholy proof of it in the fact that two of the commissioners could not sign their names. Langton had 450 communicants, but no school. Longformacus had 80 communicants, but no school; and here again one of the commissioners signs his name with a cross. Of Mordington the significant report is,—"There is ane greit necissatie for ane skule, for not ane of the paroche can reid nor wryt, except the minister, bot no fundation." St Bathans had 140 communicants; Swinton, 350; but neither of them had a school. Borthwick had a school, but no maintenance for it. Cockpen had had a school, but now it was deserted for want of means. Cranston, Currie, Heriot, and Greenock, are all reported as entirely destitute of education. Crichton had a school, but no maintenance for it. Inveresk had a grammar school in Musselburgh, with an endowment of £17 Scots, derived from certain houses; and a music school, to which King James VI. gave 300 merks yearly. Kirknewton had a school, but it was like to go to wreck for want of funds.† Such is the dark picture of the state of education in Scotland little more than two hundred years ago; but the parliament of 1633 ratified the Act of Council of 1616; the clergy followed it up; schools began to be built and endowed, and the people to grow in intelligence; but it was not till after the Revolution of 1688 that the proprietors of every parish were compelled to furnish the means of education to every child.

Having thus wandered twice from the straight path of our history, we must now return to it.

* This is noticed by Row in his History, p. 343.

† Reports of the State of certain Parishes in Scotland, 1627, Maitland Club. The cases given are taken very much at random, and may be regarded as a specimen of all the parishes reported upon.

The excitement caused by the visit of the king, and the meeting of the parliament, had long ago subsided; Lord Balmerino had been tried, condemned, reprieved, and the public sympathy had accordingly abated. There was still the deep grudge in the minds of many of the nobles at being compelled to surrender their teinds, and a degree of irritation kept up among the Presbyterian ministers by the proceedings of the Court of Commission, but the country was marvellously quiet. During the year 1634, several of the bishops were made Judges in the Court of Exchequer, and Privy Councillors; at the same time many of the inferior clergy received commissions to act with the gentry as justices of the peace; and, upon the death of the Earl of Kinnoull, in the beginning of 1635, the Archbishop of St Andrews was raised to the high office of Chancellor of the Kingdom*—a dignity which had very generally been held by ecclesiastics in Roman Catholic times, but which, since the Reformation, had been always held and eagerly coveted by the greatest nobles. These haughty peers had, for the last seventy years, been accustomed to look down upon the ministers of religion as a race of men very inferior to themselves, and now they could ill brook to see them placed by their side, or even over their head. In the meantime, however, they were obliged to bear the affront with what patience they could. Serious thinking men condemned the measure upon different grounds: they thought that the clergy should be confined to the discharge of their ecclesiastical duties, and not burdened with secular affairs.

We now approach the most exciting period of Scotch history. Long ago, James VI., in his burning desire to have uniformity of worship throughout the kingdom, had resolved to introduce into Scotland the Anglican Liturgy, or one like unto it. At his royal request, the Assembly of 1617 had agreed that a liturgy should be prepared; but he afterwards found that he had quite enough to do in compelling obedience to the Articles of Perth, and so the liturgy was allowed to drop. Charles, however, inherited his father's resolve to have religious uniformity, and when he came to Scotland,

* Row, Balfour, Guthrie.

the question of the liturgy was revived. It was understood that Laud had accompanied him for the special purpose of helping him in the work. When the matter was talked over with the bishops and Anglicizing clergy, some urged the introduction of the Anglican liturgic forms while the king was in the country, but Charles does not seem to have thought that the fulness of the time was come, and so the Church was allowed to enjoy its own ritual a little longer. One of the reasons for delay was this. It was stated that Scotland was sensitively afraid of sinking into a mere English province; that the imposition of the English liturgy would give strength to this feeling; and that it would be more flattering to the national vanity to have a liturgy of native growth. In compliance with these views, a commission was given to the Scotch bishops to prepare a liturgy as near as might be to the Anglican one.*

It has too often been supposed that Scotland at this period had no liturgy of her own, and that the Scottish clergy and people were opposed to all liturgical forms whatever. This is a mistake. Scotland had never been without a "Book of Common Prayer." Even before the Reformation was established by law, the "Service-Book" of Edward VI. was used in many of the parishes where Reformation principles prevailed. After Protestantism became the creed of the nation, the "Book of Common Order," prepared by Knox for the English congregation at Geneva, came into use, was sanctioned by several Assemblies, and continued the authorized form of worship up to the time we speak of. In 1601 the Assembly of Burntisland showed its veneration for the prayers by refusing to allow them to be altered. In 1605 Robert Bruce, the exile from Edinburgh for his high Presbyterianism, was accustomed to read them every other night to the little flock which had gathered around him at Inverness.† In 1620 Scrymgeour, when summoned before the Court of High Commission for not observing the Articles of Perth, pled that there was "no warrantable form directed or approven by the Kirk, besides that which is extant in

* Clarendon's History, vol. i. pp. 65, 66.

† Calderwood's History, vol. vi. pp. 291, 292.

print, before the Psalm-Book (Knox's liturgy), according to which," said he, "as I have always done, so now I minister the sacrament."* On the very day on which the riot took place on account of the introduction of the new liturgy, the lessons from the old liturgy had already been read in the Church of St Gile's;† and Bishop Sage affirms that there were many old people alive even in his day, who remembered to have seen it used after the civil wars, both by Prelatists and Presbyterians.‡ It was not till the Westminster Assembly met, and the "Directory for Public Worship" was adopted, that the Church of Scotland discarded a liturgy, and even then it was never formally repudiated or repealed; it was quietly allowed to drop into disuse.§ But as many clergymen do not follow the "Directory for Public Worship" now, it is very certain that many did not follow the Genevese forms in the beginning of the seventeenth century. The rubric gave to ministers the liberty of deviating from the set forms; and as extemporaneous prayer was becoming more and more prized, it is likely that the rubrical license was largely taken advantage of. It is impossible to determine how far the "Common Order" was attended to, and how far it was set aside; but it is probable it was used by all the readers and by some of the ministers, while by others it was either entirely repudiated, or at most very slightingly observed. In the Genevan Church, at present, public worship is conducted partly by liturgic forms and partly by the extemporaneous prayers of the pastors; and in this we may have a picture of public worship in Scotland before the contest about the Service-Book began.

In the year 1636, the "Canons and Constitutions Ecclesiastical for the Government of the Church of Scotland" appeared.‖ They were published by authority, and an instru-

* Calderwood's History, vol. vii. p. 421.

† Row's History, p. 408.

‡ Sage's Charter of Presbytery, p. 352.

§ Wodrow, in his Correspondence, mentions that Calderwood recommended that the Assembly should not discard the liturgy, but allow it to fall into disuse. It is certain there is no act of Assembly repudiating it.

‖ "Canons and Constitutions Ecclesiastical; gathered and put in forme for the Government of the Church of Scotland. Ratified and approved by his

ment issued under the Great Seal, in which it was declared that his Majesty ratified the said Canons and Constitutions, and commanded all invested with ecclesiastical authority to see them observed. In a short time copies of the book were in the hands of most of the ministers, and loud murmurs began to be heard, that rules so subversive of their discipline, so repugnant to their belief, should be imposed upon them by the king alone, without the interposition of any ecclesiastical court. It was, indeed, pretended that the Canons were but an epitome of the acts of the Assembly; but this was a mockery: it can scarcely be called a delusion and a snare, for no person could be deceived by it, so unlike were the one to the other. It was the decalogue with the negative struck out. A font for baptism was to be provided, and placed near the door of the church, as in Papal times; a table for the administration of the eucharist was to be placed in the upper end of the chancel, and covered with an embroidered cloth, except when the sacrament was to be dispensed; the consecrated elements were to be carefully handled, and what remained was to be eaten by the poor before leaving the church; all private religious meetings were forbidden, as unlawful conventicles; kirk-sessions and elders were ignored, and the parish alms were to be distributed at the sight of six respectable men; ordinations were to take place only at the four sacred seasons, the two solstices and the two equinoxes; the preaching deacon was to be introduced, an office hitherto unknown in the Church; no presbyter was to reveal anything told him in confession, unless it endangered his life; no presbyter was to be security for any one in pecuniary matters; no court was to be held, or excommunication pronounced, or absolution given, without the consent of the bishop; every ecclesiastical person dying without children was to leave his estate to pious uses; those who had children were to leave something, to show their affection to the Church; and, worst of all, every

Majesty's Royall Warrand, and ordained to be observed by the Clergie, and all others whom they may concern. Published by authoritie. Aberdene. Imprinted by Edward Raban, dwelling upon the Market-Place at the Arms of the Citie. 1636. With Royall Priviledge."

clergyman who subscribed these canons bound himself to use a Service-Book which he had not yet seen, and to refrain from praying to God as his heart prompted, as he would avoid deprivation. The ministers talked of these things amongst themselves, and thought them hard to bear; but the time was not yet.

The "Book of Canons" was followed by the "Book of Common Prayer." This famous liturgy, now generally known as "Laud's Liturgy," was prepared by Maxwell, Bishop of Ross, and Wedderburn, Bishop of Dunblane, and then submitted to the Archbishop of Canterbury for revisal. It is a copy of the Anglican Service-Book, with a few alterations, which increase its similitude to the Roman missal. Some of these were introduced by the Scotch bishops, but the most offensive ones were the handiwork of Laud.* All things being thus ready, two letters were sent down by his Majesty to Scotland—one addressed to his lovites, certain messengers, and all sheriffs; and the other to the Right Reverend Father in God the Archbishop of St Andrews, commanding the Prayer-Book to be proclaimed at every market-cross, and used in every church in the kingdom; and further, that every parish furnish itself forthwith with two copies of it.†

The whole country was instantly in a ferment. The people had bowed their necks and sacrificed their feelings more than once to the royal prerogative, but they would do it no more. They declared that the king had no right to impose a liturgy upon the nation without the consent of the parliament, without the consent of the Assembly of the Church. They declared that the Service-Book was Popish—that it taught baptismal regeneration, transubstantiation, the oblation of the consecrated elements, and was little better than a mass-book. They declared that they would not be restrained by the fear of man from pour-

* Stevenson, vol. i. p. 154. Kirkton says that he saw the original, with the corrections in the handwriting of Laud, and that they were all toward Popery, bringing the Prayer-Book as near to the Missal as English could be to Latin. (History, p. 30.)

† Balfour's Annals, vol. ii. pp. 224, 225. Stevenson's History, vol. i. pp. 173, 174.

ing out their hearts in prayer to God.* Some attempted to defend the book, but it was in vain. The chancellor said to Lord Rothes, that the Bishop of Derry and the Prince Tutor had praised it, and declared that there had been no such liturgy seen since the seventh century; but Lord Rothes retorted, that the Bishop of Derry was the most unsound man in Ireland.†

It is probable that a large proportion of the clergy would have accepted the Service-Book. Episcopacy had now existed for more than thirty years. Almost all the existing incumbents had grown up under its shadow—they had received their ordination from Episcopal hands; they had vowed obedience to Episcopal authority, and must have been inoculated, less or more, with Episcopal notions. But the laity almost as one man cried out against the book; as the laity in England in our own day are more unanimous than the clergy in crying out against any reversion to mediæval forms.‡ All ranks were agreed in this. Letters from noblemen of the highest standing poured in upon the Lords of the Privy Council, warning them to beware of what they did; and the murmurs of the yeomen and burghers were loud enough to be heard and understood.

A.D. 1637. It had been proposed that the Service-Book should begin to be used at Easter 1637; but such was the state of the nation that the Privy Council took alarm, and wished for delay. The bench of bishops was divided. The older bishops, with Spottiswood at their head—a man wary, wise in his generation, and well experienced in the world—were for putting off the evil day; the younger

* That these were the chief arguments used against the Prayer-Book is abundantly plain from the tenor of the numerous petitions and complaints against it, and also from Row's long argument on the subject. (History, pp. 398–406.) The chief complaints were that it was Popish, and that it was unwarrantably brought in.

† Lord Rothes' Relation, p. 10, Ban. Ed.

‡ Stevenson (vol. i. p. 169) expressly allows this; and the same thing is made more apparent by the fact that only one of the Edinburgh ministers at first refused to read the liturgy. This was Ramsay. He was afterwards joined by Rollock, neither of whom read the order respecting the use of the Prayer-Book. (See Stevenson, vol. i. p. 181.) The extreme anxiety of the king to exclude as much as possible lay influence from the Assembly of 1638 is another proof of the same fact.

bishops, anxious to ingratiate themselves with Laud, and ignorant of the temper of the people, saw nothing to dread, and were for instant obedience. Easter passed, and in only two or three churches was the liturgy read. The Bishops of Ross, Dunblane, and Brechin led the van. Some ministers had thoughts of beginning to read the liturgy with closed doors.* The summer wore on, and still nothing was done. At length the fears of Spottiswood were overcome by some motive not very well understood: some say it was a selfish one; others say it was pure infatuation,† for the pulse of the nation now indicated a state of excitement bordering upon madness; yet he not only gave way to his brethren, but obtained a positive order from court to begin the use of the liturgy without delay.

On Sabbath, the 16th of July, the ministers of Edinburgh were required to read the order respecting the introduction of the Prayer-Book on the succeeding Sunday. Some refused to do it; some would not do it themselves, but left it to their readers to do. Some read it in such a way as to show it was an unwelcome task; some not only read it, but took the opportunity of extolling the liturgy, which in future was to be the guide of their devotions.‡ The people in general heard the intimation with respectful silence; there was not the slightest disturbance in any of the churches.

Sabbath, the 23d of July, came. A large congregation had assembled in the Middle Church of St Gile's, but it had not the quiet aspect of an assembly met for religious worship; there was a restless excitement in every eye. The Archbishop of St Andrews was present to grace the occasion; and it was known that the Bishop of Edinburgh was to preach. About ten o'clock the dean, arrayed in a white surplice, entered the reading-desk, and began to read the service for the day. There was instantly a confused murmur crept over the congregation; gradually the sound became more articulate; the people got to their feet, and the whole church was a scene of uproar and confusion. The

* Lord Rothes' Relation, pp. 3, 4.
† Stevenson, vol. i. pp. 179, 180. Guthrie, p. 18.
‡ Row's History, p. 408.

voices of the women were loudest. Some cried, "Woe! woe!" others, "Sorrow! sorrow! for this doleful day that they are bringing in Popery amongst us!" The bishop went to the pulpit to try and appease the people, but it was in vain; he could not be heard. The uproar became worse, and some actually threw the stools upon which they sat at the head of the dean. The magistrates now interfered, and with some difficulty managed to clear the church of the rioters, and the service was continued with closed doors. But the crowd still remained outside. They knocked at the doors, they threw stones in at the windows, they shouted "Popery, Popery!" and called the bishops by every opprobrious name. When the bishop came out of the church, he was laid hold of by the rabble, and only rescued from their hands by the servants of the Earl of Wemyss. In the afternoon the service was again attempted, but on this occasion the magistrates had stationed themselves at the doors, and allowed none to enter but such as were likely to be quiet. But the crowd were still prowling about the street in a humour for mischief; and when the bishop came out of the church and got into the coach of the Earl of Roxburgh to be driven to the abbey, he was followed by the mob in full cry. The Tron Church was then building, and supplied abundant material for pelting the obnoxious prelate, who escaped only by the speed of the earl's horses, and the drawn swords of his footmen.*

A similar scene, though not quite so violent, had occurred at the Greyfriars, where the Bishop Elect of Argyle officiated. It is certain that these riots were confined to the lowest orders of the populace, and, singularly enough, chiefly to the women. The magistrates of Edinburgh declared this, after making inquiry, and almost all historians say the same thing. It is also certain, however, that the upper and middle classes sympathized with them, and were at that very moment forming their plans for obtaining the same object, though by more constitutional means; but there is no reason to think that they

* I have drawn this description from the accounts given in the Large Declaration, pp. 23–26; Guthrie's Memoirs, p. 20; Row's History, pp. 408, 409; Baillie's Letters and Journal, p. 18; Crawford's Lives, p. 181; Clarendon's History, pp. 87, 88.

had hounded on the mob to do as they did.* It was not necessary. These outbursts of popular fury generally originate with the rabble, who cannot understand the propriety of petitioning, and instinctively resort to violence. The lowest classes in the State approximate nearest to that condition of society where might is the only vindicator of right. The court and Episcopal party of course cried out against the sacrilege which had been committed—the desecration of God's house and God's service; and even some of the more moderate Presbyterians regretted that things had taken such a turn; but Dr Cook's apology is a good one—the people were really "contributing," says he, "to purify those temples which apparently they profaned."†

The bishops instantly sent to London an account of what had happened. Lord Clarendon declares that, up to the time when this despatch arrived, "there was so little curiosity either in the court or the country to know anything of Scotland, or what was done there, that when the whole nation was solicitous to know what passed weekly in Germany and Poland, and all other parts of Europe, no man ever inquired what was doing in Scotland, nor had that kingdom a place or mention in one page of any gazette."‡ This obscure corner of the empire was now destined to rise into notice, and to make the courtiers of St James's know that there was a nation existing north of the Tweed. Upon the 30th of July, Charles wrote to the Privy Council, instructing them to use their best endeavours to discover the rioters, and to give their help to the clergy in establishing the use of the liturgy.§

The Privy Council had at first resolved to persevere in the use of the Prayer-Book, and in this they were seconded by the magistrates of Edinburgh; and by tuck of drum the people were enjoined to quietness.‖ But they would not be

* Guthrie alone (p. 23) affirms that Alexander Henderson, David Dickson, Lord Balmerino, and the Lord Advocate, concocted the whole affair with some Edinburgh matrons.

† History, vol. ii. ‡ History of the Rebellion, p. 88.

§ Privy Council Record, 4th August 1637. Peterkin's Records of the Church of Scotland, p. 52.

‖ Privy Council Record, 28th July 1637. Peterkin, pp. 51, 52.

quiet, and the whole country continued in such an excited state, that the Council resolved to discontinue the use of the obnoxious liturgy till the king's pleasure was known; and that the people might not be deprived altogether of religious ordinances, it was agreed that sermons should be preached and prayers offered at the usual times, but that neither the old nor the new Service-Books should be employed.* The week-day meetings, however, were discontinued, at which the reader was accustomed to read the appointed prayers, so that Baillie declares Edinburgh looked like a town placed under an ecclesiastical interdict. †

On the 13th of July, proceedings had been commenced against ALEXANDER HENDERSON, minister of Leuchars, and several other clergymen, for not having given obedience to the Privy Council's proclamation in regard to the liturgy. On the 20th of August they presented bills of suspension, on on the ground that the recent innovations were illegal, being sanctioned neither by the parliament nor the General Assembly. It was difficult for the Council to answer such an argument, without making statements subversive of the constitution of the kingdom; and therefore, avoiding the general question, they simply found that their proclamation extended only to the purchase of the Prayer-Book, and no farther.‡ It was compulsory, they said, to buy the book, but not to use it. At the same time they wrote to the king that matters had now come to such a pass, that they were unwilling to do anything without his express commands;§ and delayed any farther answer to the petitions which had been presented to them till the 20th of September, by which time it was hoped that the king's pleasure would be known.

Cowardice was not among the faults of the king, and therefore he did not hesitate as to the course he should pursue. With the advice of Laud, he wrote a sharp letter to the Scottish Council, rebuking them for having suspended for a day the use of the service, and commanding them

* Privy Council Record, 29th July 1637. Peterkin, p. 52.

† Letters and Journals.

‡ Balfour's Annals, vol. ii. pp. 227–29. Peterkin, p. 53. § Ibid.

instantly to resume it.* This royal resolution became known before the Council met, and the four or five ministers who had hitherto borne the brunt of the battle were instantly joined by twenty-four nobles, a multitude of the gentry, sixty-six commissioners from towns and parishes, and nearly one hundred of the clergy, who, on the 20th of September, marched in a body to the council-house, to present the petitions against the liturgy which had been poured in from every part of the kingdom.† The Council was in a strait betwixt the imperative commands of the king and the threatening aspect of the people; but popular clamour prevailed against despotic power, and they determined still to let the liturgy alone. They delayed giving any answer to the petitions they had received till the 20th of October, and they commissioned the Duke of Lennox, who was about to start for England, to lay the true state of matters before the king.‡

In the meantime the country was actively canvassed, and petitions were getting ready from almost every town and district; and towards the 17th of October, when it was expected the king's answer would be known, crowds of people from the provinces came pouring into the metropolis. The important day came, and almost the first thing the expectant multitude heard was a proclamation at the market-cross, dissolving the Council in so far as it was called for ecclesiastical affairs; ordering all strangers to return to their homes within twenty-four hours, under pain of horning; removing the courts of justice from the capital; and condemning a book which had got into circulation, and was said to be poisoning the minds of the people in regard to the ceremonies of the Anglican Church.§

The populace were violently incensed by these proclamations, and proceeded to the commission of outrages which makes Baillie declare that they appeared to be possessed of

* Letter, King to the Privy Council, 10th Sept. 1637. Balfour, vol. ii. pp. 232, 233. Peterkin, p. 54.

† Peterkin, Introduction, p. 7.

‡ Balfour, vol. ii. pp. 233–35. Peterkin, pp. 54, 55.

§ Guthrie's Memoirs, p. 24. The proclamations are given in the Large Declaration, pp. 33, 34; also in Peterkin, p. 55.

a bloody devil.* A mob, in which the women were conspicuous, beset the Bishop of Galloway on the street, and would have probably torn him limb from limb had he not been rescued by some of his friends, and carried into the council-house. But the rioters were not disposed to regard the council-house as a sanctuary. They remained without, and with hootings and howlings demanded that Sydserf and other obnoxious lords should be delivered to them. The Council finding themselves thus besieged by an enraged mob, and feeling, no doubt, like a family in a cottage surrounded by a pack of wolves, scenting at every crevice and seeking for an entrance, despatched a messenger to the magistrates, begging them to come to their help. The messenger found the magistrates in the same evil plight as the Council, and in no condition to render assistance. A section of the mob had taken up their station before their place of meeting; some of them had forced their way into the lobbies and rooms, and threatened that unless the provost and bailies joined the city in opposing the Service-Book, they would burn the house about their ears. When this was reported to the Privy Council, the Lord Treasurer and the Earl of Wigton, accompanied by their followers, courageously forced their way through the crowd to the town-house. They found the bailies in great perplexity, but after consultation it was resolved that Traquair and Wigton should return to the council-house, and that the magistrates should do what they could to disperse the crowd; and as the first step to this, they made it known that they had acceded to the requests of the people, and would join them in their petitions.

It was thought that this concession had so appeased the mob that the Lord Treasurer and his companions might now return in safety, but they no sooner appeared in the street than they were assailed by horrible cries. The magistrates came out, and told the people they had granted all that they asked, but to no purpose; the lords assured them that they would urge their requests upon the king, but this was only mocked at; a rush was made, and the Lord Treasurer was thrown upon the ground, his hat, cloak, and white staff

* Letters and Journals, vol. i. p. 10.

of office were pulled from him, and in all probability he would have been trodden to death had not some of his friends got him instantly to his feet, and then by the sway and pressure of the crowd he was half carried to the council-house door, where he and his friends immediately got entrance. They found Bishop Sydserf and the other councillors still in a state of siege, and trembling for the result. By and by the magistrates joined them, and declared that with all their efforts they had been unable to pacify the mob. There was nothing for it but to send for those nobles who had taken an active part against the Service-Book, and at their entreaties the crowd dispersed, and the councillors got home, most thankful that they had escaped with their lives.*

Next day a proclamation was made by the Privy Council, forbidding the citizens to assemble in the streets;† but the citizens cared little for a Council whom they had threatened and insulted with impunity on the preceding day. The town, however, was quiet, but the agitation went on, and a petition was presented to the Lord Chancellor, in name of the men, women, children, and servants of Edinburgh, and another to the Lords of Secret Council, by the noblemen, barons, ministers, burgesses, and commons of the kingdom, protesting against the Service-Book, and demonstrating how wide-spread was the determination to resist his Majesty's meddling in ecclesiastical affairs.‡

The plans of the malcontents expanded with their power, as a man's avarice grows with his wealth. Their first thoughts were confined to the liturgy, but now they began to meditate the demolition of the Episcopate. Before separating, they resolved to meet again at Edinburgh on the 15th of November, bringing with them petitions and complaints against the bishops. On the appointed day the city began to fill with eager Reformers, from every part of the

* Large Declaration, pp. 35–38. Guthrie, pp. 24, 25. Baillie, &c.

† Large Declaration, p. 38.

‡ It is not quite clear whether these petitions were given in on the 17th or 18th of October. Copies of them are given in the Large Declaration, pp. 41–4. See also Peterkin, p. 56.

country. The confluence was greater than ever. The Earls of Rothes, Cassillis, Eglinton, Home, Lothian, and Wemyss, and the Lords Lindsay, Yester, Balmerino, Cranstone, and some others, had already declared themselves on the popular side; but now, mingling with the crowd for the first time, was seen the young Earl of Montrose,* who afterwards changed his side, and achieved for himself a chivalrous renown by leading the forlorn hope of the falling throne.

The multitudes who thronged Edinburgh made the Council dread lest the outrages of the 18th of October should be renewed, and therefore they sent to the nobles who had come to town a remonstrance against their meetings, as illegal and disorderly. The nobles maintained their right to meet and petition, but declared the willingness of their party to act by commissioners, and so prevent the possibility of disturbance from crowds of people being brought together.† The Council gave its sanction to the proposal, and thus unwittingly lent its aid to the establishment of a power in the State which very speedily superseded its own. Four permanent committees were accordingly appointed: the first consisted of all the nobles who had joined the cause; the second, of a gentleman for every county; the third, of a minister for every presbytery; and the fourth, of a burgher for every town. These committees sat at four different tables in the parliament-house, and were therefore called The Tables. Representatives from each formed a central committee, which sat constantly in the capital, while the others only met upon grave emergencies.‡ These Tables were at first designed only to take charge of the petitions of the masses, and urge them upon the government; but they soon felt themselves so strong, from their representing and centralizing the feeling of the country, that they began not merely to form plans for the government of their party, but to issue mandates, which were universally respected and obeyed, while the proclamations of the king and his Council

* Guthrie's Memoirs, p. 27.

† Reference is made to this in the speech delivered by Lord Loudon before the Privy Council, on the 21st of December. See Balfour, vol. ii. p. 240.

‡ Stevenson's History, vol. ii. p. 230.

were treated with contempt. They soon assumed all the powers which were possessed by the clubs of Paris during the French Revolution. The government of the country virtually came into their hands.

Charles now began to open his eyes to the revolutionary spirit which his liturgy had evoked, but still he saw things very dimly—he saw men like trees walking. He thought it enough to despatch the Earl of Roxburgh to negotiate, and, it was whispered, to bribe the leading malcontents ; and afterwards to publish a proclamation, in which he declared to his faithful subjects, that it was only the tumultuous and barbarous insolences committed in Edinburgh, in contempt of his royal authority, which had hitherto prevented his royal resolution of considering their petitions, but that he was pleased out of his goodness to protest that he abhorred all superstition of Popery, and meant to do nothing contrary to the laudable laws of his native kingdom.* A proclamation like this, which meant nothing, was not the thing to pacify a people ripe for rebellion. If it was meant as a sedative, it rather served as an irritant. On the 21st of December, the Privy Council met at Dalkeith, and the deputies of the Tables appeared before it, and showed how rapidly their views were widening, by demanding that the bishops should be removed from their seats as parties in the case. They had been previously complained of, and accused as the authors of the liturgy, the causes of all the troubles which had afflicted the country; and on that ground a formal declinature of their judgment was now given in. The declinature was a bold one, and shows how high the pretensions of the party had risen, and what were the feelings which were abroad in the country; but it is very evident that, though an attempt was made to support it by a legal argument, no plea in law could deprive the bishops of their seats at the Council-board, on this simple ground, that the Council did not then sit as a court of justice. The bishops were not upon their trial before it.† The Council, having its hands tied by orders

* Proclamation made at Linlithgow, 7th December 1637. Large Declaration, p. 46.

† Speeches of Lord Loudon and Mr James Cunningham before the Privy-

from court, remitted the whole matter for the determination of the king.

At the king's own request the Earl of Traquair, the Lord Treasurer, went up to London as the representative of the Scottish Council. His Majesty was profoundly ignorant of the precipice upon which he stood. To give up the liturgy, the Court of High Commission, the whole Episcopate, was not to be thought of. His prerogative must not be so abased. The Archbishop of St Andrews wrote him that if he condemned the present doings of the petitioners, and discharged all such procedure for the future under pain of treason, their combinations would melt like frost-work in the sun, or be driven like mist before the wind.* Laud and Strafford appear to have given similar advice.† The advice was taken, and Traquair returned to Scotland about the middle of February 1638 with his instructions.

The Council and Sessions were at this time held in Stirling, as Edinburgh was still in disgrace on account of the riots. After remaining some days in the metropolis, early on Monday morning the 19th of February, the High Treasurer set out for the north. The Lords of the Tables, by fair means or foul, got a hint of his journey and its object, and within an hour afterwards Lords Lindsay and Home were in their saddles, riding to Stirling as fast as their horses could carry them. They outrode the Treasurer, and entered the town before him. At ten o'clock the heralds, with the royal arms on their back, accompanied by the Treasurer and Privy Seal, appeared at the market-cross, to read the proclamation. It extolled the "Book of Common Prayer" as the surest defence against superstition; it declared the petitioners to be deserving of high censure, but that they might hope for forgiveness, as their conduct had arisen from preposterous zeal rather than disloyalty; it discharged all future meetings under the highest pains; and commanded all save the in-

Council, 21st December 1637. See Balfour, Stevenson, and Peterkin. In the protest made against the royal proclamation on the 19th of February following, this declinature is referred to the 19th of December, but it is certain the speeches in defence of it were made on the 21st.

* Stevenson, vol. ii. p. 267.

† Strafford's Letters, vol. ii. Harris's Life of Charles I.

habitants and Lords of the Council and Session, to leave the town without delay. When the heralds were done, and the flourish of trumpets was blown, Lords Lindsay and Home stepped forward, took instruments in the hands of a notary, and protested that they should still have a right to approach the king by petition; that they would not recognise the prelates as judges in any court, civil or ecclesiastical; that they should not incur any loss in life or lands for not observing such books, canons, rites, judicatories, and proclamations as were contrary to the Acts of Parliament and the Acts of the Assembly; that if any disturbance should arise, it should not be imputed to them; and, finally, that their requests proceeded from conscience, and had no other end but the preservation of the Reformed religion, and the laws and liberties of his Majesty's most ancient kingdom. The same scene occurred at Linlithgow, Edinburgh, and, in fact, wherever the proclamation was made. At the market-cross of Edinburgh, seventeen peers and a great concourse of ministers and citizens had assembled; the proclamation was read amid laughter and jeers; and the crowd compelled the pursuivants to remain and hear the protestation.*

Men now began to feel that the crisis was come: they could not recede, it was not likely the king would; and therefore they began to forecast the future. A crash was almost inevitable. The only safety of the nation was in union, a union cemented not only by the love of liberty, but the sanctities of religion. Some of the leading men proposed that every adherent of the good cause should be bound together as one man by a solemn covenant. A covenant was no new thing in Scotland. The barons had been accustomed to league themselves together for mutual defence by subscribing "bands." Bands of man-rent had been known for centuries. When the Lords of the Congregation drew the sword for the Reformation, they joined themselves together in a covenant, which was frequently renewed. But it was the Confession and Covenant of 1581 which was now to be revived. At that period a Popish panic had taken hold of the country: it was said that the king's favourites were

* Large Declaration, pp. 47–52.

Papists; that the king himself was at least half a Papist; that Papist emissaries traversed the country; that a Papist army might soon be expected upon the coast; and to still this feeling James VI. had a confession prepared by Craig, the old colleague of Knox, in which all the chief errors of Romanism were solemnly abjured. It was signed by the king himself, by his household, by the members of the Privy Council, by men of all ranks throughout the country; and the country again breathed freer, and felt its liberties and religion were secure.

It was proposed in 1638 to league Presbyterian Scotland by such a solemn Confession and Covenant. The kingdom was prepared for it by a day of fasting, on which the pulpits gave forth no uncertain sound. The preparation of the document was entrusted to Alexander Henderson and Johnstone of Warriston. Lords Rothes, Loudon, and Balmerino were appointed to revise it. When ready, it was found to consist of three parts. The first was a faithful transcript of the Confession of 1581; the second was a summary of the acts of parliament condemning Popery, and ratifying the liberties of the Scottish Church, and was said to have been compiled by Warriston; the third was the true Covenant, in which the subscribers swore, by the great name of the Lord their God, that they would continue in the profession of their religion; that they would defend it against all errors and corruptions; that they would stand by his Majesty in support of the religion, liberties, and laws of the kingdom, and also by one another against all their enemies; and this was said to have been written by Henderson.*

When the first draft of the Covenant was submitted to the committees, there was not unanimity. Some objected that they could not pronounce the Articles of Perth to be unlawful; others that they could not get rid of their ordination vows without perjury; others that they could not league themselves together for mutual defence without treason. But, after long discussion, alterations were made in some cases, scruples of conscience were silenced in others, and

* This Confession and Covenant is now generally bound in the same volume with the Westminster Confession, where every reader may see it.

harmony was all but restored. Everything was now ready for the subscriptions of the people, and it was determined that Edinburgh should be first tried.*

On the 28th day of February an immense concourse of people had gathered in the Greyfriars Church, and thousands who could not get access to the church crowded the church-yard. The peaceful abodes of the dead, where there was no passion, nor knowledge, nor device, contrasted strangely with the excited feelings of the living who trod upon them; and the fine old conventual building grimly lifted up its hoary walls, and mullioned windows above the surging heads of the Presbyterian multitude, with its reminiscences of Roman worship and monastic ties. Thus death and life, the old and the new, meet and harmonize. About two o'clock, Loudon and Rothes of the nobility, Henderson and Dickson of the ministers, and Johnstone, their legal adviser, arrived with the Covenant, ready for signature. Henderson opened the proceedings by prayer; Loudon next stood up and addressed the meeting; and then all were invited to come forward and sign. The aged Earl of Sutherland was the first to append his name. He was followed by Sir Andrew Murray, the minister of Abdy, in Fife. Then high-born and low-born together crowded forward to add their signatures. When all in the church had signed the solemn document, it was taken out to the church-yard, and laid upon a flat grave-stone. The enthusiasm of the crowd rose to its greatest height. Men and women were alike ambitious to subscribe their names. Some wrote after their signatures, "till death;" others could not restrain their feelings, and wept. This went on for hours, till every part of the parchment was covered, and the subscribers had only room to write their initials; and dark night alone put an end to the scene.† Henderson afterwards described it as "the day of the Lord's power, wherein they had seen His people most willingly offer themselves in multitudes, like the dew of the morning."‡ "It may well be said of this

* See Baillie's Letters and Journals.

† This copy of the Covenant, with the signatures attached, is still preserved.

‡ First Answer to the Reply of the Aberdeen Doctors.

day," says another old writer, "Great was the day of Jezreel." It was a day wherein the arm of the Lord was revealed—a day wherein the princes of the people were assembled to swear fealty and allegiance to that great King whose name is the Lord of Hosts."*

Copies of the Covenant were next day carried through the city, and signed by almost every one who was solicited. Other copies were sent down to the presbyteries for subscription; the contagious enthusiasm of the capital spread over the whole country; and almost everywhere the people, by appended names and uplifted hands, took the Covenant oath. "I was present," says Livingstone, "at Lanark, and at several other parishes, when on a Sabbath, after the forenoon's sermon, the Covenant was read and sworn, and may truly say, that in all my lifetime, except one day at the Kirk of Shotts, I never saw such motions from the Spirit of God, all the people generally and most willingly concurring. I have seen more than a thousand persons all at once lifting up their hands, and the tears falling down from their eyes; so that through the whole land, except the professed Papists, and some few who for base ends adhered to the prelates, the people universally entered into the Covenant with God."† The whole Scotch population seems to have been melted into one mass by the burning religious zeal that was abroad, as they were knit into one brotherhood by their Covenant with God. It is difficult, in times of perfect quietude, to understand the high excitement of such a period. It can only be compared to the outburst of feeling which accompanied the first preaching of Christianity, the first preaching of the Reformation, or those religious revivals which have sometimes broken out in a particular district, and sometimes mysteriously swept over a whole country.

Yet there was not perfect unanimity in the nation. Some of the Glasgow ministers and professors, and among them the famous Zachary Boyd, refused to take the Covenant. The town of St Andrews, under the influence of the Arch-

* Wilson's Defence of the Reformation Principles of the Church of Scotland, quoted by Stevenson, vol. ii. p. 298.

† Life, p. 22, quoted by Stevenson, vol. ii. p. 296.

bishop, kept back from joining in the general movement. The doctors of the University of Aberdeen both spoke and wrote against it; and few in the city could be induced to subscribe, notwithstanding the persuasions of a deputation, who hurried to the north to reduce their obstinacy. They declared it was an unlawful combination against lawful authority. Pamphlets were published upon both sides of the question; and the controversy was maintained with equal acrimony and equal ability.* But this jarring note was scarcely heard amid the full concord of voices which came from every part of the empire; and the Archbishop of St Andrews is reported, when he heard of the scene in the Greyfriars church-yard, to have said—"They have thrown down in a day what we have been building up for thirty years."

The National Covenant has been a bone of contention among Scottish historians. Some have lauded it as the offspring of piety and the love of country; others have denounced it as the offspring of fanaticism and rebellion. Some have spoken of it as an imperishable monument (the admiration of the world) of the religious feelings of our ancestors; others have told how it scandalized the Churches of the Reformation on the Continent.† It is certain that the Lord Advocate of the time declared that there was nothing in it illegal—nothing inconsistent with proper loyalty to a constitutional sovereign, and eminent lawyers of modern days have held the same; and yet, if we interpret it as the Covenanters themselves did, when they afterwards took up arms against their king for their mutual defence, it is difficult to understand how law should sanction such a league. But to quote law in such cases is mere pedantry. There are times when law must be set aside—when man resumes his natural rights. The king had violated the laws of the land: why should not the

* The Answers of Some Brethren of the Ministrie to the Replyes of the Ministers and Professors of Divinitie in Aberdene concerning the late Covenant. Printed in the year of God 1638, &c.

† The king, in his Large Declaration, affirms this; and Baillie, in one of his letters, complains that the Continental Churches had not sympathized with them in their struggles.

people? The king had attempted, in defiance of the constitution, to force an obnoxious liturgy upon the nation: why should not the nation band itself together, and defy him to do it? Is the monarch made for the nation, or the nation for the monarch? Is the will of the one or the will of the many to be supreme? Should the people, for fear of violating some statute, and giving pain to some men in high places, sit still and allow their religion and liberties to be trampled on? Had the Covenant not been subscribed, it is certain the liturgy would have been introduced, the canons enforced, and the heel of arbitrary power placed on the neck of our country. This is its justification.

CHAPTER III.

It was high time that the Privy Council should meet; and it did meet. On the very day that the Covenant was paraded about the streets of Edinburgh for signatures, the Council was sitting at Stirling, deliberating as to what should be done. It was the 3d of March before they came to a decision; but they then despatched Sir John Hamilton, the Justice-Clerk, to London, to declare to the king that the whole country was in a state of combustion; that the Book of Canons, the Liturgy, and the High Commission were the cause; and that his Majesty ought, "as an act of his singular justice," to take trial of his subjects' grievances. Two days afterwards, the Earls of Traquair and Roxburgh wrote to their "most sacred sovereign," declaring that the dread of religious innovation was so strong in every corner of the kingdom, that nothing was to be seen but a general conflagration—men strengthening themselves by subscribing bonds, and no power to repress their fury; and suggesting that, as religion was the pretext, it would be well for his Majesty to consider if it would not be wise to free his subjects from their fears, by which the sincere would be satisfied; and his Majesty would then be able to punish the insolence of those who continued to kick against authority.*

The Lord Justice-Clerk returned in April, with instructions to the Lord Treasurer, the Lord Privy Seal, and Lord Lorn to repair to court. Several of the bishops were already there; many of the Scotch nobility were always there; so

* Burnet's Memoirs of the Duke of Hamilton, pp. 36, 37.

that the king had now an opportunity of hearing all parties, and learning accurately the state of matters. Balfour affirms that the bishops, especially Maxwell of Ross, were blowing the bellows, and crying fire and sword;* but more peaceful counsels prevailed; and Charles determined to send down the Marquis of Hamilton to Scotland as his High Commissioner, with power to settle the disorders. The nobleman chosen for this important mission was in many ways the fittest man that could have been fixed upon. He stood at the head of the Scotch nobility, and had kept himself aloof from Scotch faction. His abilities were good, his politics moderate, and his manners bland and conciliatory. He has had the misfortune, however, to be abused both the high Episcopalians and high Covenanters: the one declared that he betrayed the king, the other that he betrayed the country; but this is the frequent fate of men who attempt to mediate between angry factions.

While these things were doing in London, the Covenanters in Scotland had made up their mind that the mere discontinuance of the Book of Canons, and Liturgy, and the abolition of the High Commission, would not satisfy them; that they must have a General Assembly and a parliament to give the stamp of legal authority to their worship and discipline. They were determined to place no dependence upon the absolute will of a monarch who had shown that all his predilections were against them.† Their appeal was from the king to the law. Some of them went farther, and already began to reduce to practice their own favourite notions of ecclesiastical government. Some presbyteries relieved their perpetual moderators of their duties; some removed uncovenanted clergymen from their parishes; some ordained ministers by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery apart from the bishop. The lower orders of the people went farther, and in several cases mobbed and maltreated unhappy divines who still clung to Episcopacy and refused to take the Covenant. In all these rabbles, singular

* Annals, vol. ii. p. 263.

† Demands of the Covenanters given to Traquair on repairing to court. Balfour, vol. ii. p. 252. Peterkin, p. 62.

enough, the women were conspicuous; in some cases even ladies of rank were unable to restrain their zeal, which furnishes Clarendon with the taunt, "that the Jews, as of old, stirred up the devout and honourable women." *

From the instructions given by the king to his Commissioner, it is evident he was not disposed to grant all that the Covenanters were determined to demand. He was to offer a pardon to all who should renounce the Covenant within a certain time; he was to continue the Court of High Commission, albeit it was based on no act of parliament, but to promise that it should be regulated and ratified by the first parliament that should meet; he was to refuse all petitions against the Five Articles of Perth, but he was not to urge their observance; he was to suspend the acts of Council enjoining the use of the Service-Book; if any made protestation against the royal proclamations, he was to treat them as rebels; and if, by these means, the refractory were not reduced to obedience, he was to resort to hostile measures. † From this it is evident that there was still a great gulph between the king and his subjects, which must be got over before peace could be made. The

* History of the Rebellion, vol. i. p. 89. Baillie gives some singular illustrations of this fact. Perhaps the most singular is the riot caused in Glasgow by a sermon which a Mr Annan had preached before the Synod. "Of his sermon," says Baillie, "among us in the Synod not a word, but in the town among the women a great din. . . . At the outgoing of the church about thirty or forty of our honestest women, in one voice, before the bishops and magistrates, did fall in railing, cursing, scolding with clamours on Mr William Annan; some two of the meanest were taken to the Tolbooth. All the day over up and down the streets where he went, he got threats of sundry in words and looks; but after supper, while needlessly he will go to visit the bishop, who had taken his leave with him, he is not sooner on the causey, at nine o'clock in a mirk night, with three or four ministers with him, but some hundreds of enraged women of all qualities are about him, with neaves, and staves, and peats, but no stones; they beat him sore; his cloak, ruff, hat, were rent; however, upon his cries, and candles set out from many windows, he escaped all bloody wounds; yet he was in great danger, even of killing. This tumult was so great that it was not thought meet to search, either in plotters or actors of it, for numbers of the best quality would have been found guilty. To-morrow, poor Mr William was conveyed with the bailies and sundry ministers to his house, for many women were waiting to affront him more." (Letters and Journals, vol. i. p. 21, Ban. Ed.)

† Burnet's Memoirs of Hamilton, pp. 46–50.

king was prepared merely to yield to the clamours of the people, and put a temporary arrest upon measures which were universally obnoxious. The people were resolved not to be dependent upon the sovereign's will at all, but to have everything they asked secured to them by law—by acts of parliament and acts of Assembly. They were more indignant at the way in which the Liturgy had been forced upon them than at the Liturgy itself, and for this there was only one remedy—a meeting of the Estates. They wished to see the evil destroyed—not delayed.

The Marquis of Hamilton had written from Berwick to his friends and retainers to meet him on the way to give splendour to his progress through the country; but the Tables at Edinburgh had determined that their adherents should not company with those who were not joined in Covenant with them, and so nōne came to swell the train of the Commissioner.* The Covenant was now found to be stronger than feudal ties. Religion, in leaguing the country together, had aimed a deadly blow at vassalage. Even friendship was weaker than fanaticism. Hamilton is said to have been so annoyed that he had thoughts of turning his horse's head to the south, and the explanations of Rothes, Loudon, and Lindsay did not altogether remove his wrath. Digesting the affront as he best could, he took up his residence at Dalkeith in the beginning of June, and immediately held a meeting of the Privy Council, in which his commission was produced and read; but it was already abundantly plain to him that, unless his instructions were enlarged, no adjustment of differences was possible. He was told by Lord Lindsay that the people would never relinquish the Covenant; that they wished the whole Episcopate greatly modified, if not destroyed; and that if a parliament and General Assembly were not called by the royal authority, the people would take it in hand themselves. These threatening speeches were accompanied with equally threatening deeds. A ship, with a small quantity of ammunition destined for Edinburgh Castle, had arrived in Leith roads. The Covenanters took alarm, and were preparing to seize it when the

* The King's Large Declaration, pp. 81, 82. Baillie, vol. i. p. 79.

Earl of Traquair anticipated them, and had the cargo conveyed to Dalkeith.* But this was enough to make the citizens of Edinburgh surround the castle with a guard lest it should be supplied with ammunition, of which it was known to be in want. While rebellion was thus lifting up its head in the country, there was a want of unanimity in the very councils of the king. The leanings of Argyle were already becoming plain; the Lord Advocate Hope, a thorough Covenanter at heart, was throwing every legal obstacle which he could in the way of the Commissioner, and few or none were entirely to be depended on.

June 4. On the very day after his arrival at Dalkeith, Hamilton wrote to his master that he must prepare for force if he would save the country. The king replied, on the 11th of June, that he had not been idle; that his preparations were advancing; that the Covenanters had better not be proclaimed traitors till the fleet had set sail for Scotland; that the Castles of Edinburgh and Stirling should be secured; and the people flattered with hopes, so as to win time till he was ready to suppress them, for that he was determined to die rather than yield to their impertinent and damnable demands. On the 20th of the same month his Majesty again wrote that his train of artillery, consisting of forty pieces, was in good forwardness, and would be ready in six weeks; that he had taken steps to secure Carlisle and Berwick; that he had sent to Holland for arms for 14,000 foot and 2000 horse; that his ships were ready; that he had consulted with his Chancellor of the Exchequer about the means of defraying the expedition, which was estimated at L.200,000; and that he wished the Commissioner's advice as to whether he should send 6000 soldiers with the fleet to the Frith, now that it appeared the Castle of Edinburgh could not be secured.† But these secret missives were in the meantime unknown.

The Covenanters petitioned the Commissioner to remove to Holyrood House; but this he refused to do so long as the

* Burnet's Memoirs of Hamilton, p. 52. Large Declaration. Baillie, vol. i.

† These letters are preserved by Burnet, pp. 55–59, and copied by Peterkin, pp. 68, 69.

gates and Castle of Edinburgh were guarded by patrols of armed men. Upon a pledge being given that no ammunition would be conveyed into the castle, the guards were removed, and Hamilton prepared to make his entrance into the capital, and the Covenanters to give him a reception, which would demonstrate their strength, while it did honour to his rank. On the 8th of June he made his progress toward Holyrood, along the sands of Musselburgh and Leith. "In his entry at Leith," says Baillie, in his quaint, graphic way, "as much honour was done to him as ever to a king in our country. Huge multitudes as ever was gathered on that field set themselves in his way; nobles, gentry of all shires, women a world, the town of Edinburgh all at the Watergate; but we (the ministers) were most conspicuous in our black cloaks, above five hundred on a brae-side in the Links, alone for his sight. We had appointed Mr William Livingstone, the strongest in voice, and austerest in countenance of us all, to make him a short welcome."* The Commissioner declined the stentorian display of the austere Mr Livingstone, but he is said to have been greatly affected by the spectacle which he had witnessed.

Montrose, Rothes, and Loudon, with some ministers, were appointed to treat with the Commissioner, and, in a conference with them, the Commissioner declared that the king was ready to redress their grievances, and summon an Assembly and parliament, but that, as a preliminary to this, they must renounce the Covenant as an illegal confederacy. They replied they would rather renounce their baptism than their Covenant.† When Saturday came, they showed what manner of spirit they were of, by making it known that they were resolved not to suffer the performance of the Anglican service even in the royal chapel at Holyrood House; which caused his Grace to go to Dalkeith to be out of the way.‡ The agitation, instead of subsiding, gradually increased. The citizens of Edinburgh renewed their guards; and every pulpit throughout the country was like the crater of an active volcano, belching forth fire and smoke.

* Baillie, vol. i. p. 83.

† Large Declaration, p. 87.

‡ Ibid. p. 88.

Hamilton now resolved to return to London for fresh instructions, but before doing so, he determined to publish the king's Declaration of Grace and Favour, as it was called. Preparatory to doing so, he recalled the Courts of Justice to Edinburgh—an act which was gratefully acknowledged by the council, the judges, and many of the citizens, but which the stern Covenanters met merely by requesting that Sir Robert Spottiswood, the Lord President, and Sir John Hay, the Clerk-Register, both enemies to the Covenant, should be removed from their places.* On the 4th of July, the king's Declaration was proclaimed at the market-cross. It set forth his Majesty's abhorrence of Popery, his resolution neither then nor afterwards to press the canons and liturgy, and his intention to rectify the High Commission with advice of his Council, and to have a Parliament and Assembly summoned at his best convenience.† This was certainly all that the Covenanters had at first required, but their views were widening; and, besides, they had no great confidence in the word of the king—nor had they reason. No sooner were the trumpets blown by the heralds, than the Covenanters crowded to the spot—a platform was extemporized upon the instant—the Earl of Cassillis, Johnstone of Warriston, and some others, mounted upon it, holding a protest in their hand, and whenever the proclamation was ended, they began to read.‡

On the 6th of July, the Lord High Commissioner began his journey to court, from which he did not return to Scotland till the 8th of August. His instructions upon this occasion show that his Majesty had considerably modified his opinions. Hamilton was to take steps for the summoning of a General Assembly. No renunciation of the Covenant was to be required, but he was to get the Council, and as many of the Covenanters as possible, to subscribe the Confession of 1560. But while he conceded this, he

* Large Declaration, p. 93. Baillie, vol. i.

† Large Declaration, p. 96.

‡ Rothes, in his Relation, informs us how they managed to get up a platform so rapidly. They had three or four puncheons lying at the market-cross ready; these were turned upon their end, some planks thrown across them, and upon these the protesters mounted.

was to labour that bishops should have a vote in the Assembly, and, if possible, that a bishop should be moderator. He was to protest against the abolition of bishops, but might allow them to be made amenable to the Assembly; and if any of them were accused of any specific crimes, he was not to stand in the way of their being brought to trial. Two conditions only did the king impose upon the Assembly—no layman must vote in choosing the clerical representatives to it from the various presbyteries; and when met, it must not meddle with matters determined by acts of parliament, unless by remonstrance and petition.*

The subscription of the Confession of 1560 was designed as a diversion to withdraw men from the Covenant, but it did not succeed. The exclusion of laymen from the election of ministers to sit in the Assembly was asked, because it was known that the laity were more hostile to Episcopacy than the clergy; and also because it was known that some jealousies had already arisen, which might thus be increased. The committee appointed by the Tables to consider this condition, reported that both ministers and elders must have a vote in the election of representatives to the Assembly. When this resolution was communicated to the clergy at their Table, many of them hesitated about its propriety. They had no recollection of a time when elders had such a power, and therefore they insisted that the resolution should be so altered as merely to affirm, that the right of electing representatives should be vested in those in whom, by law or custom, it had previously resided. When this was brought before the Table of the nobility, barons, and burgesses, they were highly indignant at the attempt to exclude them from a voice in the Church Courts, and a rupture was like to take place; but by the dexterous management of Henderson, the ministers were induced to yield, and the resolution restored to its original shape.† The second condition was probably designed to prevent the Assembly from touching the Articles of Perth, or the framework of the Episcopacy, as these had

* Instructions by the King to Hamilton, 27th July 1638. Burnet, p. 65. Peterkin, p. 76. Large Declaration, p. 123.

† Large Declaration. Baillie, vol. i. p. 100. Stevenson, vol. ii.

received a legislative sanction. The Covenanters refused to be fettered by any such restrictions—their Assembly must be free; and they again began to speak of calling an Assembly themselves without waiting for the royal authority.

Baffled in all his endeavours to win some concessions from the faction who now ruled the country, Hamilton proposed once more to visit the court, and get authority from the king to grant all that was desired. The request was reluctantly conceded. The king and his Commissioner met at Oatlands, where it was agreed that a free Assembly should be called; and to relieve the country of all fear of Popery, and also to out-manœuvre the Covenanters, Hamilton persuaded Charles to subscribe the Confession of 1581, which formed the first part of the Covenant, and was sometimes supposed to constitute it all. It must have been a bitter pill for the king to swallow, for it reprobates as Popish and pestilent many doctrines which he firmly believed. When the Commissioner was hastening down to Scotland, he met with some of the Scottish bishops who had sought an asylum in England, and communicated to them the instructions which he bore. They felt that their doom was sealed. On the 17th September he was in Edinburgh, three days before the time he had promised. The Council was instantly summoned, and the royal concessions were made known to them. They received them with joy; agreed to subscribe the Confession as required; and to pass an act recording their satisfaction with the goodness of the king. They farther resolved that the king's declaration should be published at the cross, and proclamation made that an Assembly should be held at Glasgow on the 21st of November, a parliament in the month of May of the following year, and requiring all to follow the example of the king and his Council by subscribing the confession, with the bond annexed for the defence of religion and law.* Many now thought that all differences might be composed, and civil war averted from the country; but the Covenanters had acquired such a habit of protesting that they protested against this declaration too, though it in reality granted them all that they desired. There was the

* Large Declaration, pp. 134, 155.

same scene as before; a platform was erected—it was crowded with Covenanters with their hats on their head, and their swords in their hand; Montrose was conspicuous amongst them, but no representative from the clerical Table appeared. There had been a division in the camp—the ministers were satisfied, but not the laity.*

There were now two Covenants in the field competing for popular favour—the king's and the Tables'. Both were industriously hawked about the country, and in some cases means more potent than persuasion were employed to procure subscriptions. There were rumours afloat of men subscribing under the influence of loaded pistols and drawn daggers. Some of the Covenanting lords wrote to the Commissioner that they had heard many grievous complaints of men being forced to give their adherence to the king's confession "against their consciences, and to the great trouble of their souls." But the Commissioner sharply retorted: "Alas! my lords, tell me now, in good earnest, whether you have heard they have used such violence in persuading this Covenant, as hath been used by your adherents in enforcing of yours? Hath the blood of God's servants, His holy ministers, been shed, which blood, I am afraid, keepeth the vengeance of God still hanging over this land? Have men been beaten, turned out of their livings and maintenance, reviled and excommunicated in the pulpits, and a thousand more outrages acted upon them for not subscribing the Covenant?"† As this Covenanting work went on, every town and every hamlet was violently agitated; delusion and imposture sprung from the ferment, and people greedily believed everything that favoured their party. A poor girl, subject to insanity, was carried away by the prevailing frenzy. She oracularly declared that the Covenant was ratified in heaven. She recited long passages of Scripture; repeated long passages from sermons; spoke of Christ as the Covenanting Jesus. Noblemen, ministers, ladies of high rank crowded to hear her, and listened reverentially to her ravings, as if they were the oracles of God.‡ This was not all. A

* Large Declaration, p. 185 † Ibid. pp. 197–99.

‡ Burnet's Memoirs, p. 83. Large Declaration, pp. 226, 227.

Jesuit priest was pressed into the service; he abandoned his Church, subscribed the Covenant, made many marvellous revelations, and had sermons preached and published in his praise.* The king's Covenant was subscribed by all the members of the Privy Council, by all the judges, saving four; by great numbers in Angus and Aberdeen, by a good many in Glasgow and its neighbourhood—probably by some twenty or thirty thousand in all. But it never had the same favour with the people as the Tables' Covenant. If Saul slew his thousands, David slew his tens of thousands.

Men now began to look anxiously forward to the Assembly upon which so much depended. The king still clung to the hope of saving the Episcopate, albeit in a modified form, and it was known that many of the clergy had not been able all at once to shake off their Episcopal prejudices; but the nobility, the barons, and burgesses, were bent upon plucking it up as a plant which God had not planted, and the Tables were already busy at work, making provision for the proper constitution of the High Court. They had indignantly repudiated the interference of the king as an infringement of its freedom; but now they ventured themselves to send down to every presbytery minute instructions as to how they should proceed in the choice of their representatives. They were instructed to provide themselves with a copy of the Act of Assembly 1597, concerning the number of commissioners they were entitled to send; they were furnished with a form of commission; every kirk-session was to send an elder to vote in the election of representatives, both lay and clerical; every minister who was erroneous in doctrine or scandalous in life was immediately to be put under process, and not chosen as a commissioner, and if chosen by the majority, the minority were to protest, and bring up the matter before the Assembly; the mode-

* Burnet's Memoirs, p. 83. Baillie, p. 102. He says—"Mr Andrew Ramsay made a very sweet discourse on the subject." This very sweet discourse was afterwards published, and still remains. It is entitled, "A Warning to come out of Babylon." Abernethy's statement was also published, and entitled: "Abjuration of Popery by Thomas Abernethy, sometime Jesuit, but now penitent sinner and an unworthy member of the true Reformed Church of God in Scotland." I have seen both.

rators of presbyteries were not to be commissioners in virtue of their office; and all chapter-men and such as read the liturgy were to be carefully excluded.*

The Covenanters declared that these instructions were necessary, as more than thirty years had elapsed since a lawful General Assembly had been held, and many of the presbyteries were ignorant as to how they should proceed. The court and Episcopal party complained that it was an attempt on the part of the Tables to pack the Assembly with creatures of their own; that the form of commission prescribed prejudged the whole question to be tried in the Assembly; that lay elders had not sat in presbyteries for forty years, and had never taken a part in the election of clerical commissioners,† and were to be intruded upon presbyteries now only to swamp them; and that by "erroneous in doctrine or scandalous in life," was simply meant, refusal to take the Covenant, which was to be considered as a sufficient ground for excluding a man from the Assembly. It is difficult to answer these things; but when party-spirit runs high, violent and unjustifiable courses are ever resorted to. It is not in man to do otherwise. However this may be, the great majority of the presbyteries succumbed to the dictation of the Tables;‡ but a few refused to adopt their commission,

* Large Declaration, p. 129. Besides the public instructions sent down to the presbyteries, there were others of a more private nature, which are now to be seen in the Wodrow MSS., and in the Appendix to Baillie's Letters, &c. vol. i. p. 469. Still further, there was a letter specially addressed to every presbytery by the Tables. See Appendix to Baillie.

† The Clerk of the Presbytery of Perth (the Rev. Mr Wilson of Forgandenny) has kindly searched the records of that presbytery which begin in 1618, to ascertain the truth of this statement. I learn from him that, previous to 1638, only absentees are mentioned by name, and these always clergymen, and the sederunt runs in the name of "the moderator and brethren," from which we may infer that no elders sat. In 1638 no fewer than nineteen elders suddenly appear, all of whom are named in the sederunt.—The Episcopalians complained with truth, that the elders, if united, had it in their power to carry every election. They may do so still. Some curious information regarding the interference of the Tables with the presbyteries will be found in the Appendix to Baillie's Letters and Journals.

‡ "The Tables in Edinburgh wrote to them," says Baillie, "that thirty-nine presbyteries already had chosen their commissioners, as they were desired; that the rest were in doing; that they heard of none who were unwilling." (Vol. i. p. 107.) Baillie elsewhere, however, refers to refractory presbyteries.

or to libel their uncovenanting brethren, and made a struggle to exclude elders from voting in the election of their clerical commissioners.

But the bishops must be brought to the bar of the Assembly, and how was this to be done? The usual way was to lodge an information with the moderator and clerk of the last Assembly; but the Covenanters were not disposed to recognise the moderator and clerk of the detested Assembly of 1618. They asked the Commissioner in his own name to grant a process against them, and cite them to appear; but this his Grace declined to do, as contrary to all precedent. They next requested the judges to grant such a process; but they replied that they could not grant a process for the appearance of any but those against whom an action had been brought, and whose causes were within the jurisdiction of their court.* They next resolved to bring the matter before the Presbytery of Edinburgh, which they justly expected would not be so squeamish. A complaint was therefore drawn out and signed by a long list of noblemen, barons, burgesses, and ministers, charging the bishops with having violated the conditions upon which they received their bishoprics; with preaching Arminian and Popish doctrines; with having exercised the powers of diocesan prelates; with having given their aid to bring in the Court of High Commission, the Book of Canons, and the Liturgy; and, finally, with being guilty "of excessive drinking, whoring, playing at cards and dice, swearing, profane speaking, excessive gaming, profaning of the Sabbath, contempt of the public ordinances and private family exercises, mocking of the power of preaching, prayer, and spiritual conference, and sincere professors; besides, with bribery, simony, selling of commissariats' places, lies, perjuries, dishonest dealing in civil bargains, abusing of their vassals, and of adultery and incest, and many other offences."† A black and fearful catalogue of crimes! The presbytery did not distress itself with any nice questions as to its jurisdiction in such a matter,

Some such cases are also mentioned in the Large Declaration, and in the Proceedings of the Assembly.

* Large Declaration, p. 208.

† This document is given in the Large Declaration, pp. 209–19.

but sustained the complaint; referred it to the approaching General Assembly; ordered it to be read in all the pulpits on the ensuing Sunday; and thus prostituted places which ought to be sacred to that charity "which rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth," for spreading among the people these abominable calumnies against men, many of them venerable for their piety, learning, and years, and whose only real crime was, that they were bishops. The sin was aggravated by being perpetrated on a Communion Sabbath, and almost over the symbols of our redemption.*

The day for the meeting of the Assembly approached. On Friday, the 16th of November, the westland gentlemen came pouring into Glasgow. Lord Eglinton and other noblemen came, attended by their friends and vassals. On the following day, the stream of commissioners and their retainers set in from the east. The prices of houses and beds were rising; but it soon began to be seen that the western metropolis had already a capacity to lodge Council, Session, Parliament, and General Assembly. On the afternoon of Saturday, it was known that his Grace the Lord High Commissioner, accompanied by many of the Lords of the Privy Council, was approaching the city, and some of the Covenanted noblemen went out to meet him, and courteous speeches were exchanged. The Covenanters protested they would ask nothing but what was right and reasonable, and the Commissioner declared that everything that was right and reasonable would be granted. The three following days were spent by both parties in preparing for the encounter.

It was on Wednesday, the 21st of November, the Assembly was to meet. It met in the Cathedral Church. That noble pile stood then just as it stands now, and as it had stood for centuries before. It rose solemnly from amid the gravestones of many generations, pointing back to the time when good Bishop Jocelyn laid the foundations of its peerless crypt. Beyond the Molendinar Burn, so famous in ancient story, the rocky eminence was covered with scraggy firs, which is now the thickly-peopled "city of the dead."

* Sir Thomas Hope's Diary, recently published by the Bannatyne Club. See also Large Declaration.

Commissioner, magistrates, nobles, barons, burgesses, ministers, came crowding into St Mungo's Church. None had gowns; many had doublets, swords, and daggers; and the jostling, thrusting, and squeezing was such, that honest Baillie declares that if men had behaved in his house so rudely as they did in the house of God, he would have turned them down stairs.* In this respect, at least, this Assembly of our Church must have resembled one of those great Œcumenical Councils of the East, still so greatly revered, which settled some of the highest mysteries of our faith amid tumult and uproar.

But though the Assembly may have been somewhat disorderly at its downsitting, and not very canonical in its garments, it comprised all the rank, and wealth, and intelligence of the country. It consisted of 140 ministers, 2 professors not ministers, and 98 ruling elders from presbyteries and burghs. Of these ruling elders, 17 were noblemen, 9 were knights, 25 were landed proprietors, and 47 were burgesses—all men of some consideration.† The Earl of Montrose sat for Auchterarder, the Earl of Lothian for Dalkeith, the Earl of Cassillis for Ayr, the Earl of Home for Chirnside. Almost every name of note was there. At one end of the church a chair of state was provided for the Royal Commissioner. Around him were ranged the members of the Privy Council—the Lord Treasurer, the Lord Privy Seal, Argyle, Marr, Moray, Glencairn, Lauderdale, Angus, Wigton, Perth, and others, their peers in pride and lineage. Right opposite to the Commissioner was placed a small table for the moderator and clerk. Along the centre ran a long table, at which sat the nobles and barons who were members of the Court, among whom might be discerned Rothes, Wemyss, Balmerino, Lindsay, Yester, Eglinton, Loudon, and many others, whose sole word was still law over large districts of Scotland. The ministers stood or sat behind, and did not, like the proud prelates, quarrel with

* Baillie's Letters and Journals, pp. 118–24. See also Burnet's Memoirs of the Duke of Hamilton, p. 93.

† The Sederunt of the Assembly remains. This analysis of it was made by Principal Lee, and is given in a note subjoined to Peterkin's Records of the Church.

earls for precedence. A gallery was assigned to young noblemen who were not members of the house; and in a gallery loftier still was a crowd of persons of humbler degree, among whom many ladies might be seen,* some of whom had perhaps assisted to hoot unhappy prelates on the street, and now beheld with exultation the proud pageant of triumphant Presbytery. It must have been one of the noblest, strangest, most exciting spectacles that Scotland has ever seen.

The first day was occupied with devotional exercises and the production of commissions. On the second day, the Covenanters argued that the first thing to be done was to elect a moderator, as otherwise the Assembly could not be constituted. The royalists maintained, that preliminary to this the roll must be made up by an examination of the commissions, as without this it could not be known who were properly qualified to vote. Like to be foiled in this point, the Commissioner asked to be allowed to read a paper which had been handed to him by the bishops, before the moderator was chosen; but he was instantly assailed by shouts of "No reading! no reading!" Speeches and clamour were followed by protests, and these were multiplied with such industry, that Baillie declares every one was weary of them except the clerk, who with every protest received a golden coin. At length the ground was cleared, and Alexander Henderson, minister of Leuchars, was almost unanimously chosen as moderator. The choice was a good one. Henderson already stood at the head of his party, and even his enemies bear witness to his gravity and learning. The only circumstance which made some of his friends hesitate about raising him to the moderator's chair was, that by doing so they would lose his assistance in debate, and in debate he was allowed to be unrivalled. Archibald Johnstone of Warriston was afterwards chosen as clerk—a man of an acute intellect, well versed in the law, and thoroughly devoted to the Presbyterian party.

After the clerk was chosen, an interesting incident occurred. It was supposed that the ancient records of the

* Baillie, vol. i. p. 124.

Church had been lost; Johnstone now stood up, stated that by a strange chance they had come into his hands, and produced them to the house. Amid much rejoicing a committee was appointed to examine the documents thus lost and found, which closed its labours by declaring that they were the authentic records of the General Assemblies from 1560 to 1590. Several days were now spent in examining commissions, and many sharp skirmishes were fought, in which his Grace was generally compelled to encounter single-handed all the polemics, both lay and clerical, of the Assembly. It was the 27th of November before the real business of the meeting began. On that day, a declinature of the Assembly's authority was given in by the bishops and their adherents. It was read amid contemptuous whispers and smiles.* On the next day the moderator put the question—Did the Assembly find itself a competent judge of the bishops? The Lord High Commissioner now declared, that though he did not object to the trial of the bishops for any particular crimes of which they might have been guilty, if the Assembly proceeded to the censure of their offices, he must withdraw, as he could not give the royal countenance to any such procedure. The Assembly showed unmistakeably its intention to proceed. Altercation ran high; angry words were exchanged; the Commissioner complained that he was crossed in everything, and finally he declared the Assembly to be dissolved, and rose to leave the house. While he was yet going, instruments were being taken, and a protest was being read, that his departure would not hinder the Assembly from finishing the work it had on hand.

Undismayed by the absence of royalty, and a proclamation at the market-cross, that all who should henceforth join in its sittings would be regarded as guilty of treason, the Assembly proceeded to business. It felt that the withdrawal of Hamilton was fully compensated by the presence of Argyle, who now openly threw in his lot with the Covenanters; and gave them the weight of his great name, his wide possessions, and his diplomatic mind. They knew that in case of need he could bring five thousand claymores into

* Large Declaration, p. 247.

the field, to help on the Covenanted work of Reformation. They passed an act declaring the Assemblies of 1606, 1608, 1616, 1617, and 1618, to have been so vitiated by kingly interference as to be null and void. They passed an act condemning the Service-Book, the Book of Canons, the Book of Ordination, and the Court of High Commission. They abjured Episcopacy and the Five Articles of Perth. They proceeded to the trial of the bishops. They were all charged with violating the caveats upon which they had been invested with the Episcopal office, and with Popish and Arminian errors; many of them with Sabbath profanation; and some of them with abominable crimes. The probation of the libels was referred to a committee. We are now in a great measure left to conjecture the nature and amount of the evidence that was led, but there is reason to fear that it was somewhat short-handed and one-sided, and that every wild rumour that was afloat was listened to as proof. The bishops, it must be remembered, were not present to defend themselves.

The Archbishop of St Andrews was proved to have been guilty of riding through the country on the Lord's Day; of carding and dicing during the time of divine service; of tippling in taverns till midnight; of falsifying the Acts of Assembly; of slandering the Covenant! Surely this was enough, but beyond this, proof was offered of his adultery, his incest, his sacrilege, his simony. Who will believe this of an old man, whom two successive sovereigns, both virtuous, though both despotic, had raised to the highest honours in the Church and the country, and against whose morals no word was spoken till the Assembly of 1638 was about to be held. "The Bishop of Brechin," says Baillie, was proven guilty of sundry acts of most vile drunkenness; also a woman and child brought before us made his adultery very probable." The Bishop of Moray was convicted of "all the ordinary faults of a bishop," and besides, says the historian, "there was objected against him, but, as I suspect, not sufficiently proved, his countenancing of a vile dance of naked people in his own house." Mr Andrew Cant, one of the members of the Assembly, was still more explicit

upon this point, and declared that the bishop was "a pretty dancer," and that at his daughter's bridal he had danced in his shirt!

We confess our inability to believe these things, albeit they were proved to the satisfaction of the Assembly of 1638. Experience has proved that a man may be a bishop, and yet a good man; a presbyter, and yet a bad man. The Assembly of 1638 managed to prove that almost all the bishops and their adherents were abandoned debauchees, while no breath of suspicion was allowed to blow upon any who clamoured for Presbytery, and signed the Covenant. Shall we believe that all the vice of the country was on the one side, all the virtue on the other?

It is certain that the great sin of the bishops was simply that they were bishops. Had it not been better and honester for the Assembly to have said so? It is certain also that they had not that respect for the sanctity of the Sabbath which has always been characteristic of Presbyterian Scotland. They aped the greater laxity of Episcopal England. They saw no evil in a ride on horseback, or a hand at whist, on the Sabbath; the Bishop of Orkney indulged in curling, and the minister of Glassford encouraged his parishioners to dance and play at the football when the sermon was done. In addition to this, it appears to be true, that a few of the Episcopalians were not very exemplary in their lives; but it is certain that, in the eyes of that generation, their Episcopacy magnified their vices, while it obscured every virtue they happened to possess.

The bishops were one and all deposed, not merely from their bishoprics, but from the office of the ministry; and eight of them were excommunicated, although the majority of these were not even charged with immorality. The sentence of excommunication was still much more dreadful than outlawry: it involved the forfeiture of every civil right; it might be followed with civil pains and punishments; no person might deal with or even speak with an excommunicated man, and therefore the bishops were obliged to flee the country to save their lives. Surely the sentence was too severe. It must be borne in mind that ever since

the Reformation, the Church of Scotland had oscillated between Presbytery and Episcopacy; that for the last thirty years—the length of a generation—it had been Episcopal; that most of the bishops had found Episcopacy established when they entered the Church; that all the ministers who now constituted this Assembly had sworn obedience to the bishops when they received their ordination; and surely, then, it was scarcely fitting that these men, in these circumstances, should consign the members of the Episcopal bench not merely to infamy and exile, but in the solemn words of excommunication, "shut them out from the communion of the faithful; debar them from their privileges, and deliver them to Satan for the destruction of their flesh, that their spirits might be saved in the day of the Lord."

Scotland did not wish bishops, and therefore, by all means, let bishops be got rid of. Let their surplices be torn from their backs; their apostolical succession be broken; their prelatic power and honour trampled in the dust; their dioceses blotted from the map. If they have really been guilty of crimes, let them be deposed. But do not let men—simply because they were bishops, tinctured, perhaps, a little with Popery and Arminianism—be consigned to perdition. The Reformers, notwithstanding their stern and somewhat surly mood, did not thus treat the Papal prelates when they drove them from their cathedrals and altars. When one political party, in our day, succeeds to another, it does not consider it necessary to head and hang its predecessors; it is only in barbaric states and revolutionary seasons that this is done.

Three of the bishops—Dunkeld, Caithness, and Argyle—tried to save themselves from the proscription of their order, by submitting themselves to the Assembly, signing the Covenant, and abjuring Episcopacy. It saved them from excommunication, but not from deposition. The Bishop of Dunkeld was an old, infirm man, unable to rise from his bed, and he begged that he might be allowed to die a minister of the gospel, but he was deprived of "all function of the ministry," and only allowed to cherish the hope that he might be restored by undergoing a course of repentance.* A good

* Peterkin's Records, p. 173. The Bishop of Dunkeld was subsequently

many parish ministers shared the fate of the bishops. The offence with which they were generally charged was Arminianism; for the Episcopalians were generally Arminians, as the Covenanters were, without exception, uncompromising Calvinists.

The Assembly passed some other acts, which flowed as corollaries from these we have already mentioned. Having abolished the Episcopate, it restored the Presbyterian government by kirk-sessions, presbyteries, and provincial synods; ordered all presentations to be directed to presbyteries; forbade ministers to accept of civil offices or employments; prohibited the printing of books connected with ecclesiastical affairs without a license; addressed a letter to the king justifying its doings, and asking his approval. At length, on the 20th of December, it closed its labours.* There is a tradition, though not very well authenticated, that Henderson, before leaving the chair, pronounced the words —"We have now cast down the walls of Jericho; let him that rebuildeth them beware of the curse of Hiel the Bethelite."†

Presbyterians, in general, look fondly back to 1638, and speak of it as the date of their second reformation. They have reason to do so. Ever since the unlucky riots in Edinburgh in 1596, the cause of Presbytery had gone backwards. Weight after weight had been laid upon it, till it was bent and well-nigh broken. In 1638 was the rebound, when bishops, surplices, ceremonies were thrown high into the air, and Presbytery was as free and elastic as ever. If there

made minister of St Madoes. The Bishops of Argyle and Orkney were also admitted to parochial charges. Episcopalians tauntingly tell that these were charged with as gross sins as the others, but that Episcopacy was all they were required to repent of.

* I have taken my account of this celebrated Assembly from its acts and proceedings; from the contemporaneous history of its procedure to be found in Peterkin's Records, a most valuable collection of historical documents; and from the accounts of it given in Baillie's Letters, Burnet's Memoirs, and the Large Declaration.

† This is first found in Stevenson's History of the Church and State, and he quotes no authority. It was probably an invention of his own. Baillie would have certainly picked up such a statement had it been uttered by Henderson; it was quite in his way.

be some things to condemn in the Assembly of 1638, there is also much to admire. Its courage was wonderful; the revolution it effected was complete. Its proceedings were undoubtedly violent; but so are all revolutions. A storm was required to purify the atmosphere. The labour of thirty years was to be undone almost in a day. It is certain that in repudiating prelates and prelacy it only fulfilled the wish of the people, for thirty long years had not weaned them from their first love to Presbytery, nor reconciled them to Episcopacy. It has sometimes been objected to it, that it went beyond its own province, set acts of parliament at defiance, and abolished a hierarchy which was established by law. This is quite true; but after all, it is only such a legal objection as a special pleader might take. The Assembly of 1638 embraced the parliament; it was the convened representatives of all the Estates; its voice was the voice of the people. If the nation wished the change, it did not greatly matter whether it was effected by its representatives met in parliament or met in Assembly. Great movements seldom square themselves with law. It is worthy of remark, however, that the first Reformation in the Scotch Church was effected by the parliament; the second by the General Assembly. Fault was found with both.

A week after the downsitting of the Assembly, the Marquis of Hamilton wrote to his Majesty, predicting how things were likely to go, and stating his conviction that nothing but an appeal to arms would succeed in restoring order. The Marquis chalks out the plan of a campaign; and ends with a devout hope that his daughters might never be married in Scotland, and that all his sons might be bred as Englishmen. But the letter is specially interesting on account of the notices which it contains of several of the actors upon the stage. "Your treasurer," says he to his Majesty, "his ambition has been great, and his labouring popularity has certainly prejudiced your service. He is a most active man, and hath many excellent parts. What his bypast carriage hath been is as well if not better known to your Majesty than to me; but he doth now labour certainly what lieth in him to advance your Majesty's ends; and hath oft solemnly sworn to me,

that, in defence of Episcopal government, he will spend his life and fortune."*

"The Earl of Argyle," the Commissioner continues, "is the only man now called up as a true patriot, a loyal subject, a faithful counsellor, and, above all, rightly set for the preservation of the purity of religion. And truly, Sir, he takes it upon him. He must be well looked to; for it fears me he will prove the dangerousest man in the State. He is so far from advancing Episcopal government, that with all his soul he wishes it totally abolished. What course to advise you to take with him for the present I cannot say, but remit it to your Majesty's serious consideration.

"Now, for the Covenanters, I shall only say this in general, that they may all be placed in one roll as they now stand. But certainly, Sir, those that have both broached the business, and still hold it aloft, are Rothes, Balmerino, Lindsay, Lothian, Loudon, Yester, Cranstoun. There are many others as forward in show, among whom none more vainly foolish than Montrose."†

Besides these notices and some others, which indicate considerable penetration of character, the High Commissioner remarks, "the Lord Advocate should be removed, for he is ill-disposed." This was Sir Thomas Hope of Craighall, an able lawyer, but who, notwithstanding the office which he held, keenly sympathized with the Covenanters. The curious diary of this remarkable man has been published by the Bannatyne Club, and illustrates not merely the character of the man, but the character of the piety prevalent at the time. The Advocate of Scotland, like the Primate of all England, was a dreamer of dreams, and like him too, he was careful enough to record them in his diary. The Advocate's dreams, however, were more religious than the archbishop's. "As I awakened on Wednesday in the morning, I fell in an earnest in-calling of the Lord, that His Majesty would pity

* The history of this ambitious and eminent man had a melancholy close. Bishop Burnet declares that he had seen him in the streets of Edinburgh begging for bread, and that in the end he was understood to have died from positive want. See History of his Own Times, vol. i. p. 22.

† Letter, Hamilton to the King, 27th Nov. 1638. Peterkin, pp. 113–15.

His people, and vindicate them from the power and rage of His adversaries, and would establish the glory of His blessed truth in the land. And while I was praying, these words were spoken, but whether by me or some other I dare not say, but the words were—'*I will preserve and save my people.*'" "About midnight, as I was regretting to the Lord the calamities of His Kirk, and humbly praying His Majesty to arise to the help thereof, and with tears begging till I became drowsy, I heard these words—'*I will arise.*'" "Being pressing the Lord for the good king, and humbly praying for the accomplishment of God's work, I heard this voice—'*I have done it.*'"* The Lord Advocate Hope was evidently a good man, a man of faith and prayer; but all his great abilities did not save him from the fanatical superstition of the day.

Civil war was now imminent; and both parties were preparing for it. We have already had some indications of the preparations of the king, his train of artillery, his ammunition, his ships, his treasure; and the Covenanters were not behind. Quite as early as the king, they had begun to buy arms and enlist soldiers. At this very time the Thirty Years' War was raging on the Continent. The House of Austria had unsheathed the sword, attempted to wrest from Protestantism the wide provinces it had won, and, led by the genius of Tilly and Wallenstein, its armies were everywhere victorious. At this critical time for the religion and liberties of Europe, Gustavus Adolphus, with his invincible Swedes, came thundering from the north like an avalanche from the hills. Many adventurers from Scotland, having no fighting to do at home, hurried to join him. The greatest of the imperial generals quailed in his presence. Tilly succumbed to him at Leipsic and the Lech; and at Lützen, neither the strategy of Wallenstein nor the awful charges of Pappenheim could save the imperial troops from the resistless rush of the Swedes, maddened by the death of their king. After this fatal day the fury of the war abated, and many of the Scotch adventurers returned homewards, where there were already rumours of wars.

* See Sir Thomas Hope's Diary, Ban. Ed. Also Napier's Life and Times of Montrose, pp. 94–100, 114–22.

The most distinguished of these military adventurers was Alexander Leslie, now destined to be the leader of the Covenanting armies. The description given of him by Spalding is so amusing that we cannot refrain from transcribing it:—"About this time, or a little before," says he, "there came out of Germany from the wars, home to Scotland, a gentleman, of base birth, born in Balvany, who had served long and fortunately in the German wars, and called to his name Felt-Marshall Leslie, his Excellence. His name, indeed, was Alexander Leslie; but his valour and good-luck attained to this title, 'his Excellence,' inferior to none but to the King of Sweden, under whom he served amongst all his cavallirie. Well; this Felt-Marshall Leslie, having conquest from nought, honour and wealth in great abundance, resolved to come home to his native country of Scotland, and settle beside his chief, the Earl of Rothes, as he did indeed, and coft fair lands in Fife. But this Earl, foreseeing the troubles, whereof himself was one of the principal beginners, took hold of this Leslie, who was both wise and stout, acquaints him with his plot, and had his advice for farthering thereof to his power. And first he advises cannon to be cast in the Potterow, by one Captain Hamilton; he began to drill the Earl's men in Fife; he caused send to Holland for ammunition, powder and ball, muskets, carbines, pistols, pikes, swords, cannon, cartell, and all other sort of necessary arms, fit for old and young soldiers, in great abundance; he caused send to Germany, France, Holland, Denmark, and other countries for the most expert and valiant captains, lieutenants, and under officers, who came in great numbers, in hopes of bloody wars."

A.D. 1639. Early in the spring of 1639, the royal army was mustering at York. The English clergy, regarding it as an Episcopal war, contributed liberally to its sinews.* The English nobility obeyed the old feudal call to meet the king, who purposed leading his army in person. The Earl of Arundel was made general—"a man," says Clarendon, "who was thought to be made choice of for his negative qualities. He did not love the Scots; he did not

* Neal's History of the Puritans, vol. i.

love the Puritans; which qualifications were allayed by another negative, he did not love much anybody else."* The Earl of Essex, already a favourite with the army, and afterwards so celebrated as the leader of the Parliamentary forces, was made lieutenant-general. The Earl of Holland was made general of the horse. The whole army amounted to upwards of twenty thousand men, and was well officered, well equipped, and followed by a powerful train of artillery. Besides these land preparations, a fleet was despatched to the Frith of Forth, under the command of the Marquis of Hamilton, to interrupt trade, threaten Leith, and favour the rising of the Marquis of Huntly in the north.

Meantime, the Covenanters were not idle. Baillie complains that, at this juncture, the management of affairs passed from the many to the few. "The secret wheels," says he, "whereupon this work has run, are all within the curtain, where the like of me wins not." He tells us he saw the handles of the clock moving, but not the mechanism by which they were moved.† The result was both natural and necessary: the government of the country, with civil war impending, could not be carried on by a mob of ministers. The preparations for war went briskly on. Noblemen acted as colonels; ploughmen were drilled into soldiers; the Castles of Edinburgh and Dumbarton were seized; fast-days were held; and sermons preached, in which the people were called to come to the help of the Lord against the mighty.‡

By the end of May the Scotch Covenanting army was encamped at Dunse-Law, where it could be distinctly seen by the king through his telescope from the other side of the Tweed, where his forces were posted. The Scotch array was somewhat tattered, but still it was full of enthusiasm, and the "old, little, crooked soldier," Leslie, managed to keep both proud barons and raw ploughmen in wonderful order. "It would have done you good," says Baillie, "to have cast your eyes athwart our brave and rich hill, as often I did with great contentment and joy, for I was there among the

* Clarendon's History, vol. i. p. 91.

† Letters and Journals, vol. i. p. 186.

‡ Burnet's Memoirs, p. 115. Baillie, vol. i. p. 195.

rest, being chosen preacher by the gentlemen of our shire, who came late with my Lord of Eglinton. I furnished to half a dozen good fellows muskets and picks, and to my boy a broadsword. I carried myself, as the fashion was, a sword, and a couple of Dutch pistols at my saddle; but I promise for the offence of no man, except a robber in the way; for it was our part alone to pray and preach for the encouragement of our countrymen, which I did to my power most cheerfully. Our hill was garnished on the top with our mounted cannon, well-nigh to the number of forty, great and small. Our regiments lay on the sides of the hill, almost round about. . . . The crowners lay in canvas lodges, high and wide; the captains about them in lesser ones; the soldiers about all in huts of timber, covered with divot and straw. . . . It was thought the country of England was more afraid for the barbarity of the highlanders than of any other terror; those of the English that came to visit our camp did gaze much with admiration upon these supple fellows, with their plaids, targes, and dorlachs. . . . Our captains were, for the most part, barons or gentlemen of good note; our lieutenants almost all soldiers who had served over sea in good charges; every company had flying at the captain's tent door a brave new colour, stamped with the Scottish arms, and the ditton, FOR CHRIST'S CROWN AND COVENANT, in golden letters. Our general had a brave royal tent, but it was not set up; his constant guard was some hundreds of our lawyers, musketeers, under Durie and Hope's command, all the way standing in good arms, and with cocked matches, before his gate, well apparelled. . . . Had you lent your ear in the morning, or especially at the evening, and heard in the tents the sound of some singing psalms, some praying, and some reading Scripture, you would have been refreshed. True, there was swearing, and cursing, and brawling in some quarters, whereat we were grieved."*

The two armies lay for some time looking at each other across the Tweed. Both were unwilling to come to blows, and gradually both became more and more anxious for an

* Letters and Journals, vol. i. pp. 211–14.

accommodation. The king knew that there was much discontent, and little willingness to fight, on the part of his nobles; the Covenanters knew that it would be impossible to keep their array long together. This mutual feeling becoming known, the Covenanters sent the Earl of Dunfermline with a supplication "to the King's most excellent Majesty," praying him to nominate some of his English subjects, well affected to the true religion and their common peace, to meet with some of them, that all misunderstandings might be removed, and the two kingdoms kept in quietness. The king listened to the supplication, and the consequence was that a deputation of the Scotch Covenanters crossed the Tweed, and came to the Earl of Arundel's tent to treat of peace.* They were scarcely entered till the king came in, "at whose unexpected presence," says Baillie, "we were somewhat moved, but yet very glad." His Majesty said he came there to hear all they had to say, and is confessed to have listened with great patience and kindness to the free, outspoken statements of the Covenanters. The truth is, Charles had a quiet, king-like manner, which fascinated many. There was a second and a third interview, and the happy result was a pacification.†

It was carried out in the following fashion: — The king published a declaration, in which he set forth his resolution to hold a free General Assembly at Edinburgh on the 6th of August, and a parliament on the 20th of the same month, for ratifying what should be concluded in the Assembly; and, further, to recall his fleets and his armies so soon as the Covenanters disbanded their forces, restored the castles which they held, and broke up the Tables. On the back of this the Covenanters signed an agreement to disband their forces within twenty-four hours, surrender their strongholds, hold no meetings but such as were warrantable by law, and carry themselves like humble, loyal, and obedient subjects.‡ The terms of the treaty were faithfully kept, and happily the country was once more at peace, without a single drop of blood being shed.

* See Letters, Supplications, &c., in Peterkin's Records, pp. 225–30.

† Baillie, vol. i. pp. 216, 217. ‡ Peterkin's Records, pp. 230, 231.

The time rapidly approached when the Assembly must meet. The king was resolved that the Assembly of 1638 should not be recognised, but willing that most of its acts should be passed anew. He had at length brought himself, though not without a struggle, to give up the Episcopate, but was anxious that, if abolished, it should be so, "not as a point of Popery, or contrary to God's law, or the Protestant religion," but simply "as contrary to the constitution of the Church of Scotland." The king's relation to the Episcopal Church of England made him naturally and properly anxious on this point. He had promised at first to be present in the Assembly himself, but changing his mind, he asked the Marquis of Hamilton again to represent him, but Hamilton begged to be excused; and the Earl of Traquair, the Lord Treasurer of the kingdom, was appointed to the difficult, though honourable post.

It was the 12th of August before the Assembly sat down. The Covenanters had agreed to humour the king, and waive all mention of the Assembly of 1638, but its principal acts were to be brought forward and passed. Upon the 17th, an act was accordingly passed, in which, after a long preamble, it is ordained, "that the Service-Book, Books of Canons and Ordination, and the High Commission, be still rejected; that the Articles of Perth be no more practised; that Episcopal government, and the civil powers and places of kirkmen, be holden still *as unlawful in this Kirk;* that the pretended Assemblies at Linlithgow in 1606 and 1608, at Glasgow in 1610, at Aberdeen 1616, at Perth 1618, be hereafter accounted as null and of none effect; and that, for preservation of religion, and preventing all such evils in time coming, General Assemblies, rightly constitute, as the proper and competent judge of all matters ecclesiastical, hereafter be kept yearly and oftener *pro re nata*, as occasion and necessity shall require; the necessity of these occasional Assemblies being first remonstrate to his Majesty by humble supplication; as also that kirk-sessions, presbyteries, and synodical assemblies, be constitute and observed according to the order of the Kirk."*

* Acts of Assembly 1639, in Peterkin's Records.

When this act was about to pass, and it was known that the High Commissioner was willing to give it his consent, the General Assembly became jubilant with joy. The old men especially, who remembered the heyday of Presbytery forty years ago, could not refrain from weeping, and must have felt like the aged Jews, when they saw the second temple rising from the ground, and wept when they thought of the glory of the first. "Old Mr John Row," so the chronicle runs, "being next called upon, said—I bless, I glorify, I magnify the God of heaven and earth, that has pitied this poor Church, and given us such matter of joy and consolation, and the Lord make us thankful, first to our gracious and loving God, and next obedient subjects to his Majesty." "Mr John Wemyss being called upon, could scarce get a word for tears trickling down along his gray hairs, like drops of rain or dew upon the top of the tender grass, and yet withal smiling for joy, said—I do remember when the Kirk of Scotland had a beautiful face. I remember since there was a great power and life accompanying the ordinances of God, and a wonderful work of operation upon the hearts of the people. This my eyes did see—a fearful defection after, procured by our sins; and no more did I wish before my eyes were closed but to have seen such a beautiful day, and that under the conduct and favour of our King's Majesty. Blessed for evermore be our Lord and King Jesus; and the blessing of God be upon his Majesty, and the Lord make us thankful."*

So far well. Thus, for the second time, did the Covenanters throw down the walls of Jericho. Twice they slew the slain. Unhappily, they proceeded still farther. They not only renewed the Covenant, with an explanatory clause, but ordained that all should be compelled to swear to it; that it should be especially administered to all Papists and others suspected of disaffection to the good cause; and that the Privy Council should be requested to superadd civil pains to ecclesiastical censures in cases of reluctance. The Covenant was no longer a bond of brotherhood, but an instrument of oppression; designed at first to work out civil and religious

* Peterkin's Records, pp. 251, 252.

liberty, it was now to be employed to coerce the consciences, and do violence to the faith of the down-trodden Papists and Prelatists. Strange inconsistency! The Covenanters knew full well that it was wrong for the Episcopalians to touch a hair of their head; but they knew not that it was wrong for them to compel Episcopalians to swear to a Covenant they abhorred, with outlawry before them in case of refusal.

Other parts of the Assembly's procedure equally exhibited the fierce intolerance which, strangely enough, kept fellowship with so much piety. The king had quite recently published his "Large Declaration," in which he had traced the history of the troubles in Scotland, and attempted to vindicate his own conduct in regard to them. This treatise bore the king's name as its author, but still it was known to have been written by Dr Balcanquhal, Dean of Durham, a Scotsman by birth. It gives most of the manifestoes which were issued on both sides with perfect fairness, and is therefore still invaluable to the historian; and though it tells its story in such a way as best to justify the king, and throw the whole blame of the troubles on the Covenanters, it is difficult to detect in it any positive untruths. It would not be easy to mention any narrative published by the opposite party more candid, more dispassionate, or more truthful. Yet, undeterred by the royal name on the title-page, the Assembly condemned the book "as dishonourable to God, to the Kirk, to the kingdom, and as stuffed with a huge number of lies." This being determined, the Assembly next proceeded to decide what should be done with the delinquent Balcanquhal, when the following speeches were made:—

"Mr Andrew Cant said—It is so full of gross absurdities, that I think hanging of the author should prevent all other censures.

"The Moderator answered—That punishment is not in the hands of Kirkmen.

"The Sheriff of Teviotdale, being asked his judgment, said—Ye were offended with a Churchman's hard sentence already; but truly I could execute that sentence with all

my heart, because it is more proper to me, and I am better acquainted with hanging.

"My Lord Kirkcudbright said—It is a great pity that many honest men in Christendom, for writing little books called pamphlets, should want ears; and false knaves, for writing such volumes, should brook heads."

Surely this must have been partly in joke, though it looks like earnest. But be this as it may, the Assembly went to the utmost extent of its power, by petitioning the king to have the book suppressed, and Dr Balcanquhal visited with exemplary punishment.*

The Assembly of 1639 imitated the spirit and carried out the intention of the Assembly of 1638, by deposing a long list of ministers, whose chief fault seems to have been their dislike of the Covenant, and their attachment to Episcopacy. Some of them were charged with Arminianism, with Popery, with immorality, but it would seem that these crimes were confined to the Prelatists, and that very little proof sufficed for a verdict of guilty.

On the 30th of August the Assembly closed its sittings. Traquair had shown himself very compliant; he gave his sanction to everything which had been done, and subscribed the Covenant; but for this he was sharply taken to task by his master. He had thought that the phrase "unlawful in this Kirk," used in the Act of Assembly abolishing Episcopacy, would satisfy the king; but the king argued that this was quite different from the words which he wished, "contrary to the constitution of this Kirk;" and that if Episcopacy were allowed to be unlawful in the Church of Scotland, it might be held to be unlawful in the Church of England too.† Already there was a feeling of uneasiness in regard to this. The same alarm was felt as when a neighbour's house is on fire.

The parliament sat down on the very day after the Assembly rose. As the ecclesiastical Estate had no representatives, a difficulty arose in regard to the choosing of the Lords of the Articles; but it was got over by the Commis-

* Peterkin's Records, p. 268.

† Letter, the King to Traquair, 1st October 1639. Peterkin, p. 236.

sioner nominating the eight nobles who by law should have been nominated by the bishops. Several bills bearing upon the abolition of Episcopacy had passed the Articles, but were not yet brought up for the sanction of the Estates; and the time was protracted from day to day, and from week to week, while posts passed to and from London. On the 24th of October, the parliament was prorogued till the 14th of November, and on the 14th of November till the 2d of June 1640, with nothing actually done. No marvel the Covenanters were indignant, and felt that they were mocked. The truth is, the king was irritated at some things which had been done in the Assembly, and did not wish them to be ratified in the parliament, as they assuredly would have been. He still clung to the hope of being able to restore Episcopacy, and did not wish to commit himself farther than he could help.* It had been far wiser and honester had he yielded freely and at once to the wishes of his people. Had he done so, he would have saved both his life and his crown.

In December 1639, Archbishop Spottiswood disappeared from the stage where he had for thirty years been the principal actor. He died an old man, and an exile in England. He was the son of the venerable Spottiswood who was the first superintendent of Lothian, and one of the firmest pillars of the Reformation. Ambitious of preferment, he early devoted himself to the king and the Episcopal party, and got the reward of his services by being made first Archbishop of Glasgow, and afterwards Archbishop of St Andrews. He is disliked by Presbyterians as the chief agent employed by the king to force Episcopacy on the country; and though some of the violent measures of the court were taken against his better judgment, perhaps on that account his conduct is all the more reprehensible, as he gave them his active support. It were uncharitable to doubt his conscientious preference of Episcopacy to Presbytery, but it cannot be denied that he was willing to sacrifice his country's faith to his own ambition.

He has enriched our literature with a history of the Church, in which we are able to trace, very clearly, the character of the man. We fail to discern any marks of genius;

* Letter, the King to Traquair, 1st October 1639. Peterkin, p. 236.

we never stumble upon a brilliant saying or a lofty sentiment; but we everywhere see the traces of sound judgment and diligent research. Upon the whole, he is candid and truthful, even when relating the debateable events in which he himself bore so conspicuous a part. Every story has two ways of telling, and of course he tells his story in his own way; but he seldom perverts a fact, more seldom still utters a falsehood, and was evidently free of all bigotry and fanaticism. He was a liberal-minded and enlightened man, though, unfortunately, the slave of despotic power. When no longer able to defend himself, he was charged with crimes which we do not believe. But we do believe that he imitated the laxity of manners at that time prevalent among the dignitaries of the English Church. He did not remember the Sabbath to keep it holy. He loved a game at cards or at dice. He could be joyous over a glass of wine. The austere Covenanters were scandalized at these things; but Covenanters and archbishop are now alike in the grave, where "their love, and their hatred, and their envy are perished," and let us therefore, so far as truth will allow, think well of the dead.

A.D. 1640. When the Earl of Traquair returned to London, he carried with him a letter, which had fallen into his hands, in which the Covenanters solicited the assistance of the French King, as the ancient ally of their nation. Though greatly irritated by this, the king listened to a petition which they had transmitted to him, requesting permission to send some of their number to court to vindicate their proceedings. The Earls of Loudon and Dunfermline were accordingly despatched to London, and during the month of March 1640, the sovereign granted them several interviews, but at length declared that he saw no ground for ratifying the proceedings of the last Assembly. A few days afterwards the Earl of Loudon was taken into custody, and committed to the Tower upon a charge of treason, his name being one of those attached to the letter soliciting the assistance of the French King. Loudon pled that the letter, though written, had never been sent; that he had come to England under the royal protection, and was not amenable

to an English tribunal for a crime committed in Scotland. These pleas were undoubtedly good in law, but Loudon was still detained in the Tower, and would probably have been brought to trial, had not the Marquis of Hamilton interfered. By his mediation, Loudon was liberated in the month of June, having entered into a private agreement with the king to do him what service he could in Scotland as the price of his liberty, and probably his life.*

A parliament had not met in England for twelve years, but now the king was reluctantly compelled to have recourse to one, probably thinking that the treasonable letter of the Covenanters would rouse the national feeling, and lead to a vote for renewing the war. But the indignation of the country had been slowly accumulating against the arbitrary government of the king, and the parliament obstinately refused to grant any supplies, till they had first obtained a redress of their grievances. There was nothing for it but to dissolve the parliament, and dissolved it was. Meanwhile the 2d of June approached, to which the Scottish parliament was prorogued; and though a commission was sent down for a further prorogation, advantage was taken of a technical blunder, and the Estates proceeded to business, enacted into laws the bills which had previously passed the Lords of the Articles, and nominated a committee to carry on the government of the country. The 29th of July came round too, and the Assembly met at Aberdeen. The moderator asked if any Commissioners were present to represent his Majesty, and none appearing, work was begun. An act was passed for demolishing monuments of idolatry; another against witches and charmers; another against revilers of the Covenant; but the most vehement debates regarded private religious meetings conducted by laymen, which had sprung up in different parts of the country, and of which we shall hear more afterwards.†

The Covenanters did not trust to the acts of the parliament and the General Assembly for protection. During the spring

* See the documents in Peterkin's Records, p. 283. Also in Burnet's Memoirs.

† Peterkin's Records, p. 279.

and summer, their drums had been beating to arms ; and the cajoleries of the recruiting-sergeant were seconded by the sermons of the ministers. Such was the spirit of the times that the rich brought their plate and had it melted down for the support of the army, receiving bonds for its repayment subscribed by the nobles. While the parliament and Assembly were yet sitting, the Earl of Argyle and General Munro were carrying the terror of their arms into the north, and ravishing the lands of all who were enemies to the Covenant. By the beginning of August a large army was marching from Edinburgh toward the south, with the renowned Felt-Marshal Leslie at its head. It halted for two or three weeks at Dunse-Law, the place of its former encampment, and then on the 21st of the month boldly crossed the Tweed, the Earl of Montrose being the first to plunge into the stream, at the head of the van-guard.

So soon as the Covenanters found themselves upon English soil, they published "Six Considerations of the Lawfulness of their Expedition into England Manifested."* By the 27th they had reached Newburn upon the Tyne, where Lord Conway was posted to oppose their progress ; but on the following day, after a short cannonade, the river was crossed, and the English fled without stopping to fight. On the 30th the Scotch were in possession of Newcastle, where the utmost consternation prevailed, which spread to Durham and even to York, where the king was encamped with an army of about 18,000 men. The Covenanters, however, used their victory with moderation, and confidence was restored. The colliers resumed their labours in the coal-pits ; the lighters entered the river to receive their cargoes for the metropolis ; and everything went on as usual.

An instance of the kindly feeling which prevailed may be given. The English were unwilling that their young plantations should be cut down to make huts for the army. The Scotch were unwilling to offend them. A deputation was therefore despatched to Edinburgh to explain the difficulty. A sermon on the subject was preached on the Sunday, and on that very afternoon the goodwives of the town brought forth

* Rushworth's Collections, vol. iii. p. 1223.

their well-stored webs of linen, and prolonging the pious work till the following day, furnished sufficient to make tents for the Covenanted warriors.*

Having obtained the great success implied in the possession of Newcastle, the commissioners of the late parliament now petitioned the sovereign, through his Secretary for Scotland, the Earl of Lanark, to right their wrongs, and settle a firm and durable peace. About the same time Charles received a petition from a number of his greatest English nobles, begging him to hold a parliament. Thus beset on the right hand and on the left,—with a hostile army in the midst of the country, and his peers uniting with his people in wishing for a parliament,—he felt it was impossible to resist. He requested the Covenanters to appoint commissioners to meet with fifteen of his English nobility, to negotiate an adjustment of differences. He summoned a parliament to meet at Westminster on the 3d of November.†

The negotiators appointed by the king and the Covenanters met at Ripon, and soon arranged that the Scottish army should lie inactive at Newcastle, and that for doing so they should get L.850 per day. They were in no hurry to settle matters farther, and as the English peers were anxious to be present in their places in parliament when it met, the negotiations were transferred to London.‡

Great events now crowd upon one another. The Long Parliament met; Strafford and Laud were impeached by the Commons; acts were passed, speeches made, and petitions presented, which clearly manifested the determination of the country to narrow the prerogative of the Crown, and either modify the Episcopate, or to pluck it up "root and branch."§ Meanwhile the Scottish Commissioners were comfortably lodged in the heart of the city, and had the Church of St Antholin's assigned them for the exercise of their worship. Here Henderson, Gillespie, and Baillie

* Baillie, vol. i. p. 255.

† See Peterkin for Documents, pp. 299, 300.

‡ Rushworth, vol. iii. pp. 1295–1306.

§ There was a petition numerously signed by the inhabitants of London presented to the parliament, praying them to remove Episcopacy "root and branch." It was generally known as the "Root and Branch Petition."

preached upon the controverted points between the Episcopalians and Presbyterians, between the Arminians and Calvinists, and thousands upon thousands, Sabbath after Sabbath, flocked to hear them. Those who could not find room within besieged the doors and clung to the windows, anxious to catch the faintest echoes of their northern eloquence.* Pamphleteering was superadded to preaching, and more than one tract, upon the subject then agitating the English mind, emanated from the pen of the Scottish divines. This, it must be confessed, was worthy of their zeal as apostles of Presbytery, but scarcely in keeping with their character as national negotiators.

At length terms of peace were agreed upon, the chief of which were,—That the acts of the parliament held at Edinburgh in June should be published by his Majesty's authority, and have in all time to come the full strength of laws; that the Castle of Edinburgh and other strongholds should be furnished and used for the defence of the kingdom, with the advice of the States of parliament; that his Majesty should not employ any one in any office who should be adjudged incapable by sentence of parliament; and that, "whereas unity in religion and uniformity in Church government has been desired by the Scots, as a special means for preserving the peace between both kingdoms, his Majesty, with advice of both Houses of Parliament, doth approve of the affection of his subjects of Scotland, in their desire of having a conformity of Church government between the two nations; and as the parliament has already taken into consideration the reformation of Church government, so they will proceed therein in due time, as shall best conduce to the glory of God, the peace of the Church, and both kingdoms." To these were added an act of oblivion, and a grant to the Scots of L.220,000 in name of brotherly assistance. All this was arranged by the middle of December, but it was not till August in the following year that it was ratified and

* Clarendon, vol. i. p. 150. Baillie, vol. i., where, in several of his letters, he gives an account of the way in which the Commissioners discharged their duties, and presents us with some lifelike pictures of the state of society in London at the time, and of the great events which were passing there.

confirmed by the English parliament.* The passage of the Tweed by the Covenanting army had effected the great end in view—the Scotch had obtained the overthrow of Episcopacy, and the English had obtained a parliament.

A.D. 1641. On the 20th of July 1641, a few weeks before the ratification of these Articles, the General Assembly met at St Andrews, and the Earl of Wemyss appeared as his Majesty's Commissioner. On the 27th it was adjourned to Edinburgh at the request of a deputation from the parliament, and Alexander Henderson was once more raised to the moderator's chair. The heart-burnings about private religious meetings were renewed. Some ministers patronized such meetings, others were indignant at them, and the discussions terminated in a very indefinite and ambiguous act. A letter was received from some of the Puritan ministers of England asking the judgment of the Kirk in regard to Presbytery and Independency, and an answer was returned applauding the one and condemning the other. The moderator was commissioned to prepare a catechism, a confession, a directory for worship, and a form of Church government—an index of the growing desire to have a religious conformity with England. While the Assembly was sitting a painful circumstance occurred. A minister from Peeblesshire, in walking from Leith to Edinburgh on a Sabbath afternoon, quarreled with a man by the way, and drawing his "whinger," stabbed him that he died. The minister was hanged for it.†

The parliament of Scotland had already been several times prorogued, on the plea that the treaty of peace was still pending, and that the king intended being present in person when his affairs in England would allow him to visit his native country. Wearied of these repeated prorogations, and impatient to proceed to some matters which they considered to be pressing, the Estates sat repeatedly during the month of July, on the pretence that they would only prepare business for the subsequent approval of the king in his parliament. There were now bitter jealousies, rivalries, and feuds

* Neal, vol. i. p. 723. Rushworth, vol. iv. p. 373–75.

† Baillie's Letters, &c., vol. i. 362–76. Peterkin's Records, pp. 293–97.

among the nobles themselves. The Earl of Traquair, Sir John Hay, Sir Robert Spottiswood, and some others, were branded as "incendiaries," being blamed for having kindled war between the king and the country. The Marquis of Montrose, Lord Napier, and Stirling of Keir, were stigmatized as "plotters," for having signed a private bond among themselves, which was thought to infringe upon the Covenant. The Earl of Argyle, while worshipped by the many, was vehemently suspected by a few as aiming at a dictatorship in the north. Lord Rothes, who was known as the Father of the Covenant, a man of good presence, pleasing manners, and great ability, had taken up his residence at the court, had gained the confidence of the king and the heart of the Countess-dowager of Devonshire, and was on the eve of becoming a great and rich man, and probably a renegade, when he died.* The Earl of Loudon had secretly engaged himself to the king, to escape the doom of a traitor; but this was publicly unknown, and he still kept company with the Covenanters, and it is very doubtful if he was faithful to the private promises he had made. The Marquis of Hamilton had many enemies, and many things were whispered against him. Lord Ker, in a drinking-bout, declared he was a juggler, and a traitor both to his king and his country, and sent him a challenge; and the parliament thought it necessary to pass an act declaring his integrity; and at the same time a Colonel Stewart was hanged, simply for some lies he was said to have told against the Earl of Argyle.

On Saturday, the 14th of August, Charles arrived in Edinburgh, and took up his residence in Holyrood House, having supped the night before with General Leslie at Newcastle.† Henderson was attached to his Majesty as chaplain, and preached before him next day in the Abbey Church. The king did not return to sermon in the afternoon, being somewhat wearied with his journey; but his chaplain informed him that such half-day attendance would not do in Scotland, upon which his Majesty promised to be more exemplary in

* Baillie, vol. i. p. 354.

† Balfour's Annals, vol. iv. p. 39. Baillie, vol. i.

future. "Mr Alexander," says Baillie, speaking of the way in which Henderson discharged his chaplaincy, "in the morning, and evening before supper, does daily say prayer, read a chapter, sing a psalm, and say prayer again. The king hears all duly, and we hear none of his complaints for want of a liturgy or any ceremonies."* In 1633 the king had concussed his nobles into joining in the Episcopal service. They now paid him back, by concussing him to take a part in the Presbyterian one. After all, it was better that the many should concuss the one, than that the one should concuss the many.

On Tuesday his Majesty proceeded to the parliament in his coach, there being no "riding," according to the ancient and laudable custom of the realm. He made a gracious speech to his Estates, declaring that he had come to his native country "to perfect whatever he had promised." The Lord Burleigh, President of the Parliament, bade him welcome; and the Earl of Argyle made a speech, comparing the kingdom to a vessel tossed in a tempestuous sea, and his Majesty to a skilful pilot, steering her amidst rocks and sands to a safe anchorage.† The parliament sat long. Its time was chiefly occupied with trivial disputes, with committing the incendiaries to prison, and ordering the "band" of the plotters to be burned by the common hangman; but it passed acts which were important enough to work a complete revolution in the kingdom. It was ordained that none should sit in the parliament till they first took the Covenant; and the Duke of Lennox, the Marquis of Hamilton, and the Earls of Morton, Roxburgh, Annandale, Kinnoul, Carnwath, and some others, were kept in an outer room till they did so.‡ The treaty with England was touched by the sceptre, and so invested with all the force of a law. The thirty-nine acts of the parliament which had assembled in June 1640, and proceeded to business without the royal sanction, were now fully ratified, and thereby Presbytery was fully established, the prerogatives of the Crown

* Letters and Journals, vol. i. pp. 385, 386.
† Balfour, vol. iii. p. 42.
‡ Ibid. vol. iii. p. 44.

seriously diminished, and even the constitution of the parliament in some respects changed.*

The king gave his sanction to all this, though it must have been with a grudge. He did more: he conferred honours upon the men who had defied him in the council and the field. The Earl of Argyle was made a marquis; Lords Loudon and Lindsay, and General Lesley, were made earls; Archibald Johnstone and some others were dubbed knights. Then came the scramble for place and power. Loudon got the chancellorship. Argyle, Glencairn, and Lindsay were made joint treasurers. Vacancies were created in the Privy Council and on the judicial bench by the degradation of royalists, and the most zealous Covenanters were advanced to their places. Then came the division of the ecclesiastical spoil. Happily the universities were attended to. Glasgow got the Bishopric of Galloway; Edinburgh the Bishoprics of Edinburgh and Orkney; Aberdeen the Bishopric of Aberdeen; St Andrews a pension of L.1000 yearly out of its own bishopric and priory. The Marquis of Argyle got the Bishoprics of Lismore and the Isles; Alexander Henderson the Deanery of the Chapel-Royal, with 4000 merks yearly.† "Thus," says Peterkin, "did leading men, cities, and universities cast lots for the garments which had clothed the Episcopal establishment."

While the king was in Scotland, news reached him of the outbreak of the Irish rebellion, under Roger More and Sir Phelim O'Neale. Immediately on receiving intelligence of the barbarities which were being perpetrated, and of the jeopardy in which the country was placed, he went to the parliament, and urged the despatch of business, that he might return immediately to England. It was not, however, till the 18th of November—more than a fortnight afterwards—that he was able to begin his journey southwards, having made so many concessions during his stay in Edinburgh, that he was said to depart "a contented king from a contented country."

The breach between Charles and his English subjects daily widened. The parliament voted its famous remon-

* Balfour. Baillie, &c.

† Baillie, vol. i. p. 395.

strance—the king impeached five of its members, and attempted to seize them in the House—the city was in a state of intense excitement—petitions poured in from all quarters—and the king, to save himself from violence, removed from Whitehall to Hampton Court. Civil war was now almost inevitable. Both parties foresaw it, and began to prepare for it. The Commons passed a bill claiming the command of the militia—the only military force which the country possessed; and Charles positively refused to give it his assent. He now removed his court to the city of York, where his adherents were numerous; and, finally, on the 22d of August 1642, set up the royal standard at Nottingham.

A.D. 1642. While the country was in this feverish state—on the very verge of a civil war—the General Assembly met at St Andrews on the 27th of July 1642. The Earl of Dunfermline, as Royal Commissioner, presented a very gracious letter from his Majesty. But on this occasion there was also a letter from another power in England—the parliament—not indeed claiming the fealty, but craving the friendship of the Scotch Assembly. In this document the English Commons deprecated the spilling of blood; they referred to the work of reformation in which they were engaged; they blamed the malignant Papists and the dissolute clergy as the authors of the conflagration which had broken out; they hoped and prayed for a peaceful termination of all their troubles.

A great idea was now filling the vision of Presbyterian Scotland. At first it had loomed dimly in the distance; it had gradually come nearer and nearer; and now it seemed quite within its grasp. Scotland was ambitious of bestowing upon England the blessings of Presbytery. The liberal spirit of the great Reformers in regard to Episcopacy and Presbytery had passed away. Anglican bishops had claimed for Episcopacy a divine right; almost every Scotch minister now believed Presbytery to have a divine right. They thought themselves bound to preach this as an article of their faith, and to propagate Presbyterianism as a part of their religion. The zeal of proselytism took hold of them, and at this period they verily believed that theirs was to be

the proud distinction of bringing back prelatic England to the purity of apostolic times. Nor were their hopes altogether unfounded. A large and powerful party in England were labouring for the overthrow of the hierarchy. Many of the Puritans were known to be Presbyterians; Independency was still in its infancy; and the parliamentary leaders secured the assistance of Scotland by flattering its ambition.

In the Assembly's answer to the king, they briefly alluded to "their desire concerning unity in religion, and uniformity of Church government, as a special means of conserving of peace between the two kingdoms;" and in their answer to the parliament they argued the question at large, and fondly anticipated the time when, by a junction of the Churches, war, idolatry, and heresy should cease, and truth, peace, and righteousness meet and kiss one another.* Lord Maitland was authorized to go to London, and carry these answers to the king and the parliament; and the Commissioners of the Church, already in London, were instructed to labour for the attainment of the same devoutly desired consummation. A letter from some ministers in England, who had embraced Presbyterian principles, was answered in the same strain; and now the common cry was, for one catechism, one confession, one directory for worship, and one form of Church government, on both sides of the Tweed.

Previous to this time the Assembly had been in the custom of appointing a commission to manage its business in the intervals of its meetings. Pleading this as a precedent, it now nominated a powerful committee, including a long list of the highest nobles and most distinguished ministers, with very plenary power to help on the good work the Church had taken in hand; to confer with the king and parliament; and, if necessary, to prepare the talked-of catechism, confession, directory, and form of government.†

Since 1638 the Assembly had assumed the power of removing ministers from place to place, without much reference either to the wishes of the ministers themselves, or the rights of the patrons. A congregation petitioned them for some favourite minister; their petition was discussed; the

* Peterkin's Records, pp. 320–33. † Ibid.

objections of any who opposed the translation listened to; the good of the Church at large taken into account; and a decision given. Business of this kind had occupied a considerable portion of the Assembly's time for the last four years. An act was now passed laying down some rules for the translation of ministers, and the whole subject of patronage was discussed. The king had proposed, that in the case of all vacant parishes of which the Crown held the patronage, the presbytery should transmit him a leet of six candidates, out of which he should select one for the cure; but the Assembly complained that this was more than was to be expected of them, when it was difficult to find one good minister, not to say six. Argyle made an offer for himself and the noblemen who were present, to resign to the presbytery and people the liberty of choosing their ministers, if the Assembly would undertake to bind all such entrants never to seek for an augmentation of their stipends. The offer was unworthy of the great Argyle, and seems to prove that with all his love for Presbytery he would willingly see presbyters in a state verging upon pauperism. He had pocketed the episcopal revenues of Lismore and the Isles; could he spare nothing out of this Church plunder for the poor Churchmen whose great patron he was? The Assembly wisely declined the offer, properly repudiating popular election if it was to be combined with beggary. The Earl of Lauderdale spoke strongly against popular elections in any circumstances; and so the subject was dropped without anything being decided.*

The letters of the Assembly were promptly answered both by the king and the parliament. The king declared his determination to reform all abuses in the Church of England; his wish to see unity of religion in the island; but warned the Assembly that those who made the fairest pretensions to them, would no sooner embrace Presbytery than *they* would Episcopacy.† The parliament professed their desire to see one Confession of Faith, and one form of Church government in all his Majesty's dominions, and declared that

* Baillie, vol. ii. pp. 47, 48. Peterkin's Records.

† Burnet's Memoirs, p. 197.

they had found the hierarchy a burden too heavy to be longer borne.* Within a week afterwards, the parliament, to show that it was in earnest, passed "an act for the utter abolishing and taking away of all archbishops, bishops, their chancellors, and commissaries;" but it was remarked that, while they threw down one form of Church polity, they did not set up another in its stead. The Covenanters did not observe this, for they never dreamt that anything could be preferred to Presbytery. In truth, all the sympathies of the Scotch nation were now with the English Puritans and the English parliament. It was certain that the king had granted them all that they desired, but they knew it was sore against his will, and dreaded that what was given in his time of weakness might be reclaimed in his time of strength. The king was despotic and prelatic—the parliament was puritanic and democratic; they were like the negative and positive poles of the battery; the Covenanters were repulsed from the one, and attracted to the other.

But this feeling was not universal. Many had still some remains of loyalty, which nothing could eradicate; many contemplated with horror the shedding of civic blood. The parliament of 1641, before dissolving, had appointed a large committee to act as conservators of the Treaty of Peace with England, and had in fact invested it with the power of the king and his estates. This body met in September, and, under the influence of Hamilton, a communication was made to Charles, requesting that the queen, who had gone to Holland, should return and act as a mediator, and pledging themselves, if this should fail, to support the throne. Among the names attached to this declaration is that of Alexander Henderson.† Since the king's visit to Scotland, it had been remarked that his zeal had decayed, and bitter things were beginning to be said of him.‡ The truth is, he had more moderation of sentiment, as he had infinitely more solidity of judgment, than most of the men with whom he acted.

Meanwhile the battle of Edgehill was fought with inde-

* Peterkin's Records. † Burnet's Memoirs, p. 201.

‡ Baillie; who properly defends his friend.

cisive success; but, upon the whole, the operations of the king during the campaign, before the winter set in, had given him some advantage over his faithful Commons. This made the parliament more than ever desirous to secure the assistance of the Scotch. They despatched an agent to Edinburgh, and sent after him a declaration to the people of Scotland, which was met by a counter-declaration from the king. On the 20th of December the Privy Council met, and the two declarations were produced. The Marquis of Hamilton moved that they should publish the king's declaration. Lord Balmerino remarked, that if they published the one, they should publish the other. "Do you propose that," said the Marquis, "because we owe the same obedience to the parliament as to the king?" The Earl of Lanark, who had produced the king's declaration, here interposed, and said that he had his Majesty's commands for its publication. "We sit here for no good purpose," retorted Argyle, "if every message is to be regarded as a command;" "and they two," says Burnet, "let fly at one another for a while with much eagerness." It appears that all shades of opinion were to be found in the Council; some were for publishing both declarations, some neither; one man was for publishing the parliament's, and not the king's; but it was finally carried by a majority that the king's should be published, and not the parliament's. For some time before this, the Marquis of Hamilton and the Marquis of Argyle had been on friendly terms with one another; but now a complete rupture took place. Hamilton adhered to royalty, and Argyle gave the weight of his great name to the democratic opinions which were current in the Kirk.*

The decision of the Council was odious to the country; and the Conservators of Peace attempted to disguise its nauseousness by declaring that to publish a document was not to approve of it, and by resolving to publish the parliamentary declaration too.† The Marquis of Hamilton and the Earl of Traquair now endeavoured to unite parties by a petition to the Council, expressed in very general and guarded terms, in which they simply begged their lordships

* Burnet's Memoirs, pp. 204, 205. † Ibid. p. 206.

not to pledge themselves to anything which might put the peace of the Church and the kingdom in jeopardy, and to bear in mind that, while they rendered to God the things which were God's, they should also render to Cæsar the things which were Cæsar's. This was known at the time as the Cross Petition; it was signed by many noblemen and gentlemen; "but the preachers," says Burnet, "threatened damnation to all the authors and subscribers of it, and detestable neutrality became the head on which they spent their eloquence."*

A.D. 1643. The Council gave no direct answer to this petition, but appointed commissioners to proceed to England, and offer to act as umpires between the king and his commons. These were joined by commissioners from the Church, who were instructed to beg the king to abolish Episcopacy, establish Presbytery, and call a meeting of the Scottish parliament. In February 1643, they had repeated audiences of the king at York; but his Majesty declined their mediation, refused to accede to their requests, and denied them liberty to proceed to London.†

As the tide of feeling rose higher, it was resolved to call a convention of the Estates. The king at first refused it his consent, and even so keen a Covenanter as Sir Thomas Hope argued against it; but the convention, nevertheless, met, and Charles, under the pressure of necessity, agreed to give it his royal sanction, provided it kept within certain prescribed limits. The convention, however, declared itself free to transact what business it pleased independent of the king:—the government, in fact, was republican. The country had been prepared for the meeting of the convention by a solemn fast, in which the pulpits did the work which is done in our day by partisan and political newspapers. When business was begun, a remonstrance was read from the commission of the General Assembly, setting forth the dangers to which religion was exposed, and praying the convention to look upon the cause of their brethren in England as their own. The convention thanked the commission, and took the hint; but as the country was scarcely yet prepared for

* Burnet's Memoirs, pp. 206–9. † Ibid. pp. 213–16.

the idea of an armed intervention, they simply resolved to raise levies under the pretext of repressing some moss-troopers on the borders.*

But the General Assembly, at this period, was really the governing body of Scotland, and it met on the 2d of August. Sir Thomas Hope, the Lord Advocate, produced a commission to appear for his Majesty, and is the only instance of a commoner holding this high post. A few days after the meeting began its sittings, a deputation from the parliament of England landed at Leith, and were introduced to the Assembly. The ministers had been exhorted beforehand to be more than usually grave in the presence of the puritanic strangers from the south; and the Moderator exercised his authority with greater than ordinary severity.† The deputation represented to the House that they acknowledged with thankfulness the zeal of the Scotch Church in extirpating every relic of Popery; that they were anxious to have the same good work perfected among themselves, and had begun it by removing the High Commission, ejecting the bishops from the House of Peers, abolishing Episcopacy, and calling an Assembly of Divines to meet at Westminster; and that now, in the time of their danger and distress, they were anxious, not only for the prayers of their brethren in Scotland, but for such other assistance as they could give. These representations were backed by a letter from some of the Puritan clergy, and another from the Assembly of Divines, which had already begun its sittings, both couched in the peculiar phraseology of the time.‡

The proposals of the English were keenly canvassed in committee. Some thought that Scotland might still act as a mediator, but this was repudiated as hopeless and vain. The parliamentary commissioners were anxious for a civil league, but the Assembly would hear of nothing but a religious Covenant. What was liberty to them without religion? What was religion without Presbytery? Was not the establishment of their favourite polity in England the burden of all their prayers—the end of all their toils;

* Guthrie's Memoirs, p. 114. Burnet, p. 233.

† Baillie, vol. ii. p. 88. ‡ See Peterkin's Records.

for what else did they meddle with such matters; and now would they descend from their high position? Henderson produced a draft of a proposed League and Covenant. The commissioners suggested that room should be left for the toleration of Independency; but the Assembly would not hear of this—there must be Presbytery, and Presbytery only, over all the land. Finally, the Solemn League and Covenant, as we now have it, was brought before the Assembly, prefaced by a speech by Henderson, and every man gave it his assent. The Convention of Estates was still sitting, and on that very afternoon they also gave it their concurrence.*

The subscribers to this Covenant bound themselves to labour for the preservation of the Reformed religion in Scotland, and for the reformation of religion in the kingdoms of England and Ireland in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, according to the Word of God, and the example of the best Reformed Churches; to endeavour the extirpation of Popery, prelacy, superstition, heresy, and schism; to defend the privileges of the parliament, and the person and authority of the king; and reveal all malignants and incendiaries who should obstruct their purposes. It was afterwards noted that England was not expressly pledged to Presbytery by this Covenant, and said that the Scotch ministers had been outwitted by the English diplomatists; but it is probable that there was perfect good faith on both sides at the time. The enthusiastic Covenanters never doubted but that if the Church of England was reformed according to the Word of God, it must be made Presbyterian, and they fondly dreamt that the great work for which it was worth to have lived, and even to have died, was now accomplished.

The Solemn League and Covenant was carried to England, and the 22d of September was appointed for subscribing it. On that day both Houses of Parliament, the Assembly of Divines, and the Scotch Commissioners, assembled at St Margaret's Church, at Westminster. The business on hand was opened with prayer. Nye and Hen-

* Baillie's Letters, &c., vol. ii. p. 91.

derson explained the benefit the Church and the kingdom would derive from such a holy alliance. The Covenant was then read from the pulpit, article by article, and while this was being done, every person stood up, and with his right hand raised to heaven worshipped God, and entered into Covenant with Him. The Commons then went up to the chancel and subscribed their names to one parchment copy, while the Assembly put their signatures to another.* It was afterwards subscribed in every county of England; and the Committee of Estates in Scotland more than emulated the zeal which had been displayed in the south, by ordering subscription on the pain of the confiscation of goods. With beggary before them, very few refused their names.

As the result of the Covenant thus concocted by the Church, and solemnly sworn in the presence of heaven, the Scotch army, mustering twenty-one thousand men, under the command of Lesley, now Earl of Leven, crossed the Tweed at Berwick, and entered England, to seek for conformity of religion amid the horrors of civic warfare.

* Neal's History of the Puritans, vol. i.

CHAPTER IV.

THE government of Scotland at this period approximated very closely to a theocracy. The power of the king was gone; the power of the parliament was in abeyance; the General Assembly was the governing body, and its ministers and elders constantly declared that they had derived their legislative authority from Jesus Christ, the King and Head of His Church. Never since the Jewish theocracy was dissolved had such a spectacle been seen. The Old Testament epoch seemed to have been revived in our country. Every act assumed to itself a religious character; even the wars were religious wars, and this was proved by the fact, that in the Old Testament the wars of God's people were called the wars of the Lord.* These ideas were associated with something of the old Hebrew exclusiveness. The men of those days regarded their nation as the chosen nation; their Church as *the* Church: the world, as of yore, was divided into Jews and Gentiles.

Religion was dominant in the national mind; but it was not that broad, loving religion which we see reflected in the pages of the gospel of the blessed Jesus. It was narrow in its notions, and somewhat bitter in its spirit. It hated Popery and Prelacy with an equal hatred, and was not always able to separate between Popery and the Papist, between Prelacy and the Prelatist, so as charitably to love the one, while it piously detested the other. The false believer and his false faith were apt to be regarded with the

* Acts of the General Assembly, 1648.

same feelings, and visited with the same condemnation. The common idea seems to have been that there could be no religion beyond the pale of Presbytery. Had not the apostles founded a Presbyterian Church when they founded the Christian Church? Could not Presbytery claim a *jus divinum?* Was not its polity right, and all others wrong? Was not Prelacy but a rag of Popery; and was not the Pope Antichrist? Were the sacraments properly administered, were souls likely to be saved, in a Church which had no Scripture warrant for its constitution and government? The Covenant helped to make notions narrow already narrower still. In order to be a good Christian, it was necessary not merely to be a Presbyterian, but to be a Covenanter; and there is reason to dread, that among the vulgar, many must have imagined that swearing to this Covenant was to be included in that other and better covenant which is ordered in all things and sure.*

But the Presbyterians had an honest desire to extend to others the blessings they themselves enjoyed. They were zealous for the conversion of England. The General Assembly had actually signed a League with puritanic England, which tacitly implied that an army was to be marched across the border to assist in overturning Episcopacy and building up Presbytery. The martial and the religious spirit combined as they did during the period of the Crusades. Then, Palestine was to be rescued from the Moslem; now, England was to be rescued from the bishops. In the one case, as the other, religious enthusiasm was superadded to natural courage, and armies marched to battle believing themselves doing the work of Heaven. But Christianity always appears to disadvantage when wielding the carnal weapon; and ecclesiastical councils hardly appear to be discharging their proper functions when arming nations and churches against one another.† But such was the temper of the time, that

* See Wodrow's History, vol. i. p. 269, and note by the Editor.

† The high pretensions of the Church at this period are seen from the General Assembly's answer to the Paper sent from the Honourable Committee of Estates, of the date July 28, 1648. Among other things they say, "As to their Lordships' other desire of our demonstrating from the Word of God that the Kirk hath interest in the undertakings and engagements in war, and what

there would have been no war unless it had been invested with a religious character; and the parliament would not have acted apart from the General Assembly. The soldiers of Cromwell's army got drunk in taverns with religious sign-boards suspended at the door; the Scottish nation got drunk with blood under banners inscribed with Christ's Crown and Covenant.

Zeal without knowledge is sure to do mischief. The persecution of unhappy old women charged with witchcraft had greatly abated; but it was now revived. Stringent acts of Assembly were passed against charming and sorcery; and we read with horror that, in Fife alone, and in the course of a few months, upwards of thirty persons charged with witchcraft were burned to death. The Assembly testified their astonishment and regret at the extraordinary increase of witches, not knowing that it was the increase of superstition which saw witches where no witches were. A new crusade was also begun against the architectural and artistic remains of the Papal Church, which were ordered to be destroyed as the monuments of idolatry; and pity it was so; but still we have no tears to waste upon the destruction of altars and altar-screens, when we think of the temple of the human body thus cruelly burned.*

Presbytery had not yet learned toleration. It had no idea of dividing with other forms of faith the empire of the land. It must be sole and supreme. Its voice now was different from what it had been when fighting its sore battle against Popery and Prelacy. It had conquered in the strife, and, like other conquerors, it would brook no rival. Every man in Scotland must be a Presbyterian and a Covenanter.†

that interest is, we had thought that point to be without controversy in this kingdom, not only in respect of Kirk and State, their joining and co-operating (each in their proper sphere) in the former expeditions of this kingdom into England, but also because the very conferences which have been between committees of Kirk and State, concerning the undertaking and engagement, doth plainly suppose an interest of the Kirk in such affairs." (Peterkin's Records, pp. 505, 506.)

* Peterkin's Records, p. 279. Baillie, vol. ii. p. 88. The Assembly of 1643 gives specific directions as to how witches are to be dealt with. See Peterkin, p. 354.

† In every document of the time we have instances of the persecuting spirit

And it is amazing how much unanimity was produced by the pressure of penal laws; how quickly Popery had disappeared; how quickly Episcopacy was disappearing; and how entirely the land was Presbyterian. Not content with the universality of its dominion in Scotland, it aspired to the same universality of dominion in England. It would not do to say that some Englishmen conscientiously preferred Episcopacy, and others Independency: were not Episcopacy and Independency forms of error, and must not every error be destroyed? If Presbytery had prevailed, it is not likely that freedom of religious opinion would even yet have been known. But the little stone was already hewn out of the mountain which was to break in pieces the huge image of iron and of clay. Oliver Cromwell was soon to preach toleration with a drawn sword in his hand.

The Church of Scotland had always been Calvinistic. John Knox had been a scholar of Calvin, and stereotyped, in the confession which he presented to the Scotch parliament, the lessons he had learned at Geneva. But now Calvinism became more than ever a vital article in our creed. Many of the Episcopal clergy, following in the wake of Laud, had professed themselves Arminians, and the stern Presbyterians were strongly repelled from everything that was associated with Episcopacy. They cast out every man who was charged with having uttered an Arminian sentiment, and made an uncompromising Calvinism the badge of their party. But besides this, Calvinism is native to the Scottish mind. The land which has produced so many metaphysicians could scarcely content itself with the plausible but unphilosophic system of Arminius. Calvinism

of the Covenanters. The following are taken from John Nicoll's Diary:—"At this tyme, also, my Lord Linton wes excommunicate and wardit (imprisoned) for taking in marriage the Lord Seytoune's relict, dochter to the late Marques of Huntlie, scho being excommunicate for Poprie." "At this tyme, and sundry yeiris befoir, many persones were trublit for not subscryving the Covenant, and ministeris deposit for the same. Mr Gawin Stewart, minister of Dalmellingtoun, not onlie deposit fra his ministrie, bot he debarrit *ab agendo* in all his actiones and causis civill for recovery of his dettis. Lykewayis James Macaulay, goldsmith, wes not only excommunicate for refusing to subscryve the Covenant, bot lykewayis at his death, his corps dischargit to be buryeit in the churchyaird."

appeals to the pure intellect, though in some of its tenets it may offend the feelings. Arminianism appeals to the feelings, and to gratify them, in many of its principles it violates reason. The Scotch cast of intellect led it to adopt the former.

Scottish piety is in many respects peculiar, and this peculiarity has arisen partly from the character of the Scottish mind, and partly from the history of the Scottish Church. It is intellectual rather than devotional. In this we see the Scottish mind. It pours contempt upon all outward forms, and this is probably to be traced to its struggles with Episcopacy. Some of these characters were at this very period written upon the Scottish heart, and burned deeply into it by the persecutions which followed.

A.D. 1643. Presbytery was now required to hold its own in the Assembly of Divines at Westminster. This celebrated Assembly was called together by an ordinance of the parliament, under the pressure of the Scotch demand for uniformity; and though prohibited by a royal proclamation, it met on the 1st of July 1643. It consisted of a hundred and twenty-one divines and thirty lay assessors; and, a few months after its first meeting, it was joined by six commissioners from the Church of Scotland, who were welcomed by the proloquitor in a set harangue, and afterwards took an important part in the debates. The Scotch commissioners were Alexander Henderson, Robert Baillie, Samuel Rutherford, and George Gillespie, ministers; and Lord Maitland and Sir Archibald Johnstone, elders.*

We have already seen Alexander Henderson recognised as the leader of the Scotch Church, and as deserving his proud position by his great abilities, and a moderation of sentiment unknown to many of those with whom he associated. His spare form, thoughtful face, and small peaked beard, gave him the appearance of a man devoted to study, fasting, and prayer. Robert Baillie had recently been brought from the parish of Kilwinning, to be Professor of Divinity

* Neal's History of the Puritans, vol. ii. The Earl of Cassillis and Mr George Douglas were also nominated by the Assembly as commissioners, but they do not appear to have gone to London. See Peterkin, p. 359.

in the University of Glasgow. He was an able linguist, and a lover of books; and, like most such men, fonder of penning his thoughts quietly in his study, than of uttering them amid the excitement of debate. He was an amiable man, but somewhat changeful in his moods; and though always well meaning, and inclined to mercy, he never had sufficient energy of character to think and act for himself. His "Letters and Journals" furnish us with some pictures, as lifelike as photographs, of the principal actors then on the stage of affairs, and not unfrequently give us a peep of what was passing behind the scenes. It is the book of all others to be read by those who would understand the period of the Covenant. Samuel Rutherford had many of the attributes of an eloquent man, and his letters, purged of indecencies, are yet read by many with delight. His style often seems an echo of the Old Testament prophets: sometimes he emulates the lofty sentiments of Isaiah, and sometimes he pours out his feelings in the dulcet strains of the Song of Solomon; but in many cases the wax of his wings appears to melt, from his ascending too near to the sun, and he comes rapidly down into the mire. Unfortunately, he appears to have thought that obscenity was no longer obscene when clothed in religious drapery, and hence we frequently meet in his writings with expressions which the coarseness of the times does not altogether excuse. It was the age of Howe, Baxter, and Milton. His "*Lex Rex*," published about this time, is in many respects an able treatise on constitutional law; but he appears to go beyond Buchanan in his ideas of liberty, and to approach indefinitely near to republicanism. George Gillespie had already distinguished himself by a book against the Anglican ceremonies, and is confessed to have acted no mean part in the discussions at Westminster. His "Aaron's Rod Blossoming" shows that he had carefully studied the subjects of debate; but his subsequent history proves that he was a man of a violent temper and extreme views. Sir Archibald Johnstone was a thorough lawyer and a keen partisan: he was not merely Presbyterian, but democratic, and consequently strongly disliked by the king. Lord Maitland was at this time a high-flying Covenanter; but

we shall afterwards hear of him in a different character and under a different title—the Duke of Lauderdale.

The Assembly at first met in Henry VII.'s Chapel; but as winter approached, and the days got cold, they adjourned to the Jerusalem Chamber, where they had a comfortable fire, around which the lords of the parliament were accustomed to cluster, and listen to the theological debates.* About sixty was the average daily attendance. Three hostile parties soon began to hoist their colours—the Erastians, the Independents, and the Presbyterians. The Erastians were weak in the Assembly, but strong in the parliament; and their weakness in the Assembly was in some measure redeemed by the great names of Lightfoot, Coleman, Selden, Whitelock, and St John. The Independents did not count more than ten or twelve divines, but they were mostly men of piety and learning, enthusiastically attached to their opinions, loud in their praises of universal toleration, and already beginning to acquire an ascendency in the army. Their principal oracles were Goodwin, Nye, Burroughs, and Bridge. The Presbyterians formed the great majority of the Assembly, as at this period they probably formed a majority of the nation. The Episcopalians, deterred by the proclamation of the king, sent no divine to speak a word for the fallen Church, and not a voice was lifted in its praise.

The Assembly had at first directed its attention to the Thirty-nine Articles, and had proceeded so far as the sixteenth, when they were diverted from such doctrinal discussions by an order from the parliament, requesting them to turn their attention to Church government and worship. Discussion now ran high regarding the office-bearers of the Church—apostles, evangelists, prophets, pastors, bishops, elders, deacons, widows. The ruling elder of the Church of Scotland was strenuously opposed, but finally allowed. The subject of ordination excited still more vehement debates; and when Church Courts were introduced, and the Scotch commissioners expounded their fourfold gradation—the congregational, classical, provincial, and national, citing Scripture for each—all the three parties were brought into

* Baillie, vol. ii. p. 108.

violent collision. The Independents fought hard, and managed to protract the debates, under the impression that their cause was a growing one. The Assembly was not yet prepared to give a constitution to the Church; but by the month of November 1644, it had prepared its "Directory for the Public Worship of God," to which the parliament gave its sanction.*

In the preface to the "Directory," it is candidly confessed that the "Book of Common Prayer" had been of eminent utility in the period following the Reformation, and that it had become offensive only by its being urged imperiously upon all. But the Church, it was said, was now ripe for a further reformation. The order of worship, as now prescribed, was to be prayer, the reading of a portion of the Old and the New Testaments, psalm-singing, prayer, sermon, prayer, psalm-singing, and, finally, the congregation was to be dismissed with a blessing. No forms of prayer were prescribed; but what ought to be the burden of each prayer was largely expressed. Baptism was to be administered without any ceremony, save the sprinkling with water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The sacrament of the Supper was to be celebrated frequently. The communicants were to take their place at the table; the word of institution was to be read; the bread and wine were to be blessed, and severally distributed, the minister himself partaking while he dispensed to the people. Marriage was to be celebrated, after the proclamation of banns, publicly in the churches, but not on the Sabbath day. The dead were to be buried without any ceremonies; there were to be no prayers, no chanting of hymns; but the minister might seize upon the occasion to put the living in mind of their latter end.†

This "Directory" was carried down to Scotland by Baillie and Gillespie, and laid before a General Assembly which had met at Edinburgh, in the beginning of 1645. On the 3d of

* I have drawn this description of the Westminster Assembly from Baillie's Letters, vol. ii., and from Neal's History, vol. ii. I have also consulted Hetherington's History of the Westminster Assembly.

† See the Directory for the Public Worship of God.

February it was solemnly sanctioned, and ordered to be observed by all ministers in the kingdom; and from that day to this it has remained the directory for our worship. It was shortly afterwards ratified by the parliament. Neither the Act of Parliament nor the Act of Assembly refers to the "Book of Common Order," which had hitherto been the authorized form of worship, but it seems to have been implied that the "Westminister Directory" was to supersede the Geneva liturgy.

At the time when this General Assembly was sitting, Montrose was filling the land with the terror of his arms. For long his Covenanting zeal was known to have abated. During the campaign of 1640, he was discovered holding a secret correspondence with Charles: he had afterwards signed a private bond with some of his friends, for which he was denounced as a "plotter," and brought to trial: he finally put his services and his sword at the disposal of the king. He declared that he was still a Covenanter, but would never be a traitor; and it is easy to understand how a man might approve of the early proceedings of the Presbyterians, and reprobate their subsequent ones.* We need not charge him with inconsistency, or with being an apostate and deserter. It is very probable, however, that his jealousy of Argyle, who had early obtained an ascendency in the councils of the Covenanters, decided his choice. They had long ago been rivals. It had been said of them that they were like Cæsar and Pompey: the one could not bear an equal, and the other would have no superior.† Yet they were very different men. Argyle was of small stature, red haired, not very well favoured, and so constitutionally nervous, that his conduct in the field subjected him to the imputation of cowardice; but withal he was far-seeing, politic, and indefatigable in pursuing his ends. Montrose, on the other hand, was a rather tall, and very handsome man. His manner was stately and somewhat theatrical. He was impulsive and impetuous, and liked to do things in a dashing way; but he was regarded

* Napier's Life and Times of Montrose, pp. 111–58. Balfour's Annals, vol. iii.

† Napier's Life and Times of Montrose.

as deficient in judgment, and his opinion had hitherto carried very little weight.

Armed with a commission from the king, Montrose unfurled the royal standard on the banks of the Gary. His whole army at first consisted of about a thousand Irish, who had landed under Alister Macdonald; but soon hundreds of Celts from the hills of Athol and Badenoch gathered around him. With this strange array of wild Irishmen, and wilder caterans, he swept down from the mountains; defeated Lord Elcho at Tippermuir; entered the city of Perth; proceeded northwards along the coast; forced Lord Burleigh from the field, and carried Aberdeen by storm. Argyle was at this time the leader of the Covenanting armies in the north. He followed in the track of his conquering antagonist, but was either unable or unwilling to come up with him. At last they did meet at Fyvie, where Montrose was again victorious. When winter began to set in, the marquis retired to his castle of Inverary, where he thought himself secure amid the fastnesses of his native mountains. But in the depth of December, with the ground covered with snow, Montrose descended from Athol upon Loch Tay, pursued his desolating career along its banks, crossed mountains, and penetrated glens where the eagle and the deer were alone to be seen, and, to the horror of Macallum More, appeared on the hills overlooking his stronghold on the shores of Loch Fyne. Argyle escaped in a fishing-boat, leaving his clan to the tender mercies of his most deadly enemy. Inverary was burned, and the whole country converted into a wilderness. Having scoured every glen, and seen the smoke ascending from the hamlets he had given to the flames, Montrose began his march toward Inverness; but while he was yet on his way, he heard that Argyle was again at the head of his sept, strengthened by some Lowland troops. Instantly wheeling about, he struggled along mountain-passes, and through drifting snow, till after a weary march he came upon the Covenanted host at Inverlochy, at the western extremity of the chain of lochs now connected by the Caledonian Canal. Argyle, before the battle began, put off from the shore in a boat, and from the loch beheld his banners

borne down, and fifteen hundred of his followers laid dead upon the field.*

Feb. 1645. The parliament and General Assembly were sitting when this battle was fought. Baillie and Urry were recalled from England to cope with this invincible warrior in the north. But still the star of Montrose was in the ascendant. He stormed and plundered Dundee; he defeated General Urry, first at Auldearn, and afterwards at Alford; and gathering adherents from the fame of his victories, he marched into the Lowlands, crossed the Forth some miles above Stirling, and, taking a westerly direction, arrived at Kilsyth, where he was confronted by Baillie and Argyle with an army eight thousand strong. Battle was joined; and once more the Covenanters were swept away by the wild rush of the Royalists. Five thousand of them are said to have perished on the field or in the flight. After the battle, Montrose marched toward Glasgow, which he entered in triumph; and all Scotland might be said to lie at his feet. The Covenanters were in dismay, and begged their favourite hero, old Leslie, to return to their rescue.

Montrose now proceeded toward the south, with the view of rousing the Border chivalry, and perhaps effecting a junction with the king, whose fortunes in England were well-nigh desperate. About the same time Leslie crossed the Tweed with a large detachment, chiefly of cavalry, and marched toward Edinburgh, to save his friends. On reaching Musselburgh, he suddenly faced about, and on the 12th of September took up his quarters at Melrose. The army of Montrose, now greatly diminished in numbers, was lying the same night at Philiphaugh, on the left bank of the Ettrick, and not more than a mile from the town of Selkirk. That night Montrose spent in the town, little dreaming that Leslie was within a few miles of him. Early on the morning of the 13th, Leslie was in motion, and, favoured by a thick mist, was close upon the Royalists before his approach was perceived. Montrose flung himself upon a horse, and, crossing the river, was soon in the midst of his men; but the fatal effects of a surprise were apparent. All was in

* Napier's Life and Times of Montrose. Balfour. Baillie. Burnet, &c.

confusion. The valley of the Ettrick, widening at this point, afforded a large level space for cavalry to act; and Leslie's brigades soon dashed in full career against the half-formed battalions of Montrose. The struggle did not last long; and the gallant leader of the now vanquished Celts, after making a hopeless struggle to redeem the day at the head of his horse, cut his way through the enemy, and retreated up the banks of the Yarrow, attended by not more than thirty cavaliers.

A body of Montrose's infantry had taken shelter within an enclosure, and there gallantly defended themselves for some time; but at length laid down their arms, on the promise that their lives would be spared. The preachers who accompanied the Covenanting army cried out against this, and insisted, from Old Testament precedents, that they should be put to the sword. Lesley stained his laurels by yielding to their clamours. The helpless wretches were marched out to the open plain, and mercilessly shot down. Sir Robert Spottiswood, the late President of the Court of Session, and several others of noble and gentle birth, were taken prisoners, and shortly afterwards hanged, for no other crime than their loyalty.* These barbarities were remembered afterwards, when the tide of fortune was turned; and we do not wonder that they were.

We must now wander southwards, and see what is passing in England, as the Church of Scotland was extending her agencies beyond the Tweed. The Earl of Strafford had long ago been brought to the block, not for any crime known to the law, but because he was esteemed by the parliament too dangerous a man to be allowed to live. Archbishop Laud, after lying for three years in the Tower, was now led out to the same fate. Many thought it a pity that the blood

* Napier's Life and Times of Montrose. Among the Wigton Papers is one in which Sir Robert Spottiswood pleads hard for his life. As he knew that Hebrew precedents were likely to be quoted against him, he enters into an argument to show that such cases were not applicable. Another objection to his being spared which he meets is this—"If quarters be susteined, the whole natione, and especiallie the Estates of Parliament, will be guilty of the breach of the Covenant, and of ther oath in parliament anent the prosequutione of malignants."

of the old man should be spilt because he had believed in the five points of Arminius, and loved the splendid ritual of the Church of Rome; but the Covenanters regarded him as the troubler of their Zion, and the Puritans remembered how he had persecuted their sect, and had no pity on his grey hairs.

Cavaliers and Roundheads were reviling and butchering one another; and England was experiencing the miseries of that warfare for success in which the Latin generals could have no chaplet and no triumph. The Scotch army had taken part in the fierce struggle of Marston Moor; had assisted in the reduction of York; and then, marching northwards, had entered Newcastle by storm. This done, the Covenanted warriors seemed disposed to rest upon the laurels they had won.

In the beginning of 1645, commissioners from the king met commissioners from the parliament at Uxbridge, to try if it were possible to arrange a peace. As religion presented one of the principal difficulties, the plenipotentiaries were accompanied by preachers; and Alexander Henderson represented the Scotch. The competing claims of Episcopacy and Presbytery to a Divine right were debated till the nobles were heartily tired; and the Marquis of Hertford put an end to the squabble by remarking, that both claimed what he believed neither possessed. The negotiations ended in nothing. The king was asked to abolish Episcopacy, to establish Presbytery, and not only to take the Solemn League and Covenant himself, but to compel others to take it too. This was too much for him.*

The cause of Presbytery had been making rapid progress among the English clergy. London contained a hundred and twenty-one ministers, and all these were Presbyterians but two.† The organs had been silenced, the altars removed, the Prayer-Book laid on the shelf, and schemes for the erection of presbyteries and synods were already in agitation.‡

* Cook's History, vol. iii. p. 92. Peterkin's Records. Rushworth, &c.

† Baillie, vol. ii. pp. 271–96.

‡ Letter from the Commissioners in London to the General Assembly, 4th June 1644. Peterkin's Records, pp. 400, 401.

This rapid conversion of the nation was due as much to the presence of the Scotch army as of the Scotch ministers; and it is amusing to find Baillie, when vexed in spirit by the Independents, writing home to his friends that the best way to remedy such insolencies was largely to recruit the regiments at Newark.*

But the Independents were not to be put down. Holding that every congregation was a perfect Church in itself, they repudiated presbyteries, synods, and assemblies, and shocked the Scotch commissioners by talking of taking the sacrament of the Supper in their pews, of preaching with their hats on, and of extending liberty of conscience to all. Knowing the persuasive power of the Scotch army, they lifted up their voice against it. They declared it was useless; that the expense of maintaining it was intolerable; and that, notwithstanding days of fasting and meetings of presbytery within its lines, it was defiling the land with whoredoms.† Cromwell had already thrown out some unmistakeable hints that, unless a universal toleration were given, he would exact it from both senators and divines at the head of his invincible brigades.

The Erastian spirit which pervaded the parliament grieved the Scotch Presbyters almost as much as the love for Independency which was growing up in the army. The legislature showed no dislike to ecclesiastical courts, but it showed a determined resolution to keep these courts subservient to itself; and the successors of Andrew Melville imagined this to be an infringement of the crown-rights of the Redeemer, and remonstrated earnestly against it. While such controversies were going on, sects were multiplying with alarming rapidity. Millenaries, Antinomians, Anabaptists, Libertines, Familists, Enthusiasts, Seekers, Perfectists, Antiscripturists, Ranters, Beheminists, preached their strange doctrines, and practised their strange rites; and not unfrequently the corporal in the army, or the shopkeeper at his counter, imagined himself commissioned by Heaven to expound the Scriptures, to administer the sacraments, and become the founder of a sect. We now regard these extravagances of the religious

* Baillie, vol. ii. pp. 300, 325, &c. † Baillie, vol. ii. pp. 319, 320.

life with composure; but that generation, accustomed to unity, and ignorant of dissent, beheld these things as men for the first time behold the hideous forms of animal life which crawl forth from a decaying body.

A.D. 1646. But affairs were fast coming to an issue. The fortune of war had gone against the king, and, driven to despair, he sought shelter in the Scotch army in the beginning of May 1646. It was strange he should have trusted himself to the men who had been the first to raise the revolutionary storm; but it is probable he thought he could depend upon the loyalty of his ancestral kingdom, and imagined that since he had granted them all that they desired for themselves, they would not stubbornly insist upon his bestowing the same blessings upon others. In this he was wrong. The Scotch believed themselves sworn to a covenanted uniformity, and were now as eager to extend Presbytery to England as ever they had been to procure it for themselves. Negotiations for a termination of hostilities were instantly set on foot. The king was asked, alike by English and Scotch, to abolish Episcopacy, ratify the proceedings of the Westminster Divines, take the Covenant himself, compel others to do so, and set up a Church in uniformity with its principles. He declared that he could not in conscience do so, as he held by the Divine right of Episcopacy, but professed himself willing to be convinced if he were in error.*

It was thought that controversy might open his eyes, and he condescended to enter the lists with Henderson, the greatest champion of Presbytery. The letters which passed between them have been preserved, and do honour to both controversialists. The king is complimentary to the learning and abilities of Henderson; and Henderson, while honestly stating his opinions, is ever mindful of the majesty of the throne. The argument on both sides is candid, learned, and logical. It has been disputed as to whether should bear the palm; but it is certain that neither obtained the victory.† Within a month or two after this, Henderson,

* See Documents in Rushworth's Collections.

† Works of Charles I., vol. i.

worn out with anxiety and fatigue, died at Edinburgh, and was honoured in his grave by both friends and foes.

The Episcopal party in England was now crushed, and the contest for supremacy lay between the Presbyterians and Independents. The Presbyterians were honestly anxious to come to terms with the king, and it is certain that, had he consented to their conditions, he would have saved his crown and his life, and might have reigned long as the head of a limited monarchy and a Presbyterian Church. Commissioners from the English parliament, commissioners from the Scotch parliament, Lord Leven, at the head of the officers of the Scotch army, begged and importuned him to yield; but still he pled that his conscience would not allow him; and if it was so, we must respect while we pity him. The Independents rejoiced in his obstinacy.* Many of them were republicans, and wished to see the monarchy utterly overthrown. All of them were separatists from Presbytery as well as from Episcopacy, and knew that, if its foot were planted in the land, bonds, confiscation of goods, and exile awaited them.

July 6. While these negotiations were still pending, the English parliament intimated that there was no longer any need for the presence of the Scotch army; and the Scotch declared they were willing to retire so soon as their arrears were paid. They claimed nearly two millions, but by September they had come down to L.400,000; which the English consented to pay, one-fourth before the army left Newcastle, and the remainder by instalments afterwards. On the 18th of the same month the English parliament declared that it belonged to them to dispose of the king, to which the Scotch parliament demurred; but the Commission of the General Assembly strengthened the hands of the English, by protesting that they could not consent to the monarch setting foot upon Scottish soil till first he had signed the Covenant.† On the 21st of December thirty-six

* See Baillie's Letters, of this date, to Henderson at Newcastle, vol. ii.

† A Solemn and Seasonable Warning to all Estates and Degrees of Persons throughout the Land; by the Commissioners of the General Assembly. See Rushworth's Collections.

carts left London with the first instalment for the Scottish army. On the 5th of January 1647 the parliament appointed commissioners to proceed to Newcastle and receive the king from the Scotch. On the 16th of the month the Scottish Estates transmitted their consent to the king going to Holmby House in Northamptonshire, to remain there till he should give satisfaction to both kingdoms. On the 23d the commissioners appointed to receive the king arrived; and on the 30th the Scotch army marched out of the town, leaving the unhappy monarch in their hands.*

These transactions are held by some to have left an indelible stain upon the honour and loyalty of the Scottish nation. They are said to have sold their king. The reproach receives some appearance of truth from the fact, that the negotiations for the payment of the army arrears and the disposal of the king's person were contemporaneous; and it may be allowed that the payment of the arrears had something to do with the disposal of the king, for it left no pretence for the Scotch to remain upon English soil, and thus brought matters to an issue. The army, in returning to Scotland, must either take the king along with them or leave him behind. Had they adopted the former alternative, they ran the hazard of a war with England, and incurred the anger of the Scottish clergy, who had declared that they would not suffer an uncovenanted king within their borders. They therefore resolved to leave Charles upon English ground, and in the custody of his English parliament. In this no great wrong was done. It must be remembered that in 1647 nobody knew what was to happen in 1649. The scene before Whitehall was yet undreamt of. They did not deliver up Charles that he might be led to judgment and death. Notwithstanding all their oddities, they would rather have shed the last drop of their own blood than have done so. They merely left him in the hands of his southern subjects that he might be coerced into their terms. Much could be said in favour of his being left to the tender mercies of his English rather than his Scotch subjects. England was much the larger country. The

* See Rushworth's Historical Collections. Also Peterkin's Records, pp. 460–65.

king ordinarily resided in England, and was in England while the question of his custody was debated. It was with his English parliament he had waged war; it was his English subjects who asked reform. Scotland had got all it wished years ago, and now it had nothing to ask but that the same blessings should be bestowed upon England. Why should not Scotland leave Charles in England, that England might concuss him into its measures? Were not the countries bound by Covenant ties,—did they not seek the same things,—would it not look like a violation of their pledged faith had the Scotch carried away the king into their own country, and left the English to settle their distracted state as they could?*

A.D. 1648. The Church of Scotland had now attained to the summit of its greatness. It had achieved the conquest of prelatical England, and given a form of polity to the whole empire. With the sanction of the parliament, presbyteries had been set up in London and other parts of the country;† and the Westminster Assembly, after having lasted for five years and a-half, and sat one thousand one hundred and sixty-three times, had nearly finished its labours.‡ In 1645 the General Assembly had given its sanction to the "Form of Church Government" and the

* Among Lord Somers' Tracts there is a sarcastic answer to the arguments of the Scotch for retaining the king. Its title is both comic and characteristic: "An Unhappy Game at Scotch and English; or a full answer from England to the papers of Scotland; wherein their Scotch mists and their fogs; their sayings and their gainsayings; their jugglings; their windings and their turnings, hither and thither, backwards and forwards, and forwards and backwards again; their breach of Covenant Articles and Treaty; their king-craft; present design against the two Houses of Parliament and people of England; their plots and intents for usurpation and government over us and our children detected, discovered, and presented to the view of the world, as a dreadful omen, all-arm, and warning to the kingdom of England. 'Jer. v. 6. And although they say, The Lord liveth, surely they swear falsely.' 'Hosea, x. 3. They have spoken words, swearing falsely in making a covenant; thus judgment springeth up as hemlocks in the furrows of the field.' Edinburgh, printed (as truly as the Scotch papers were at London) by Evan Tyler, printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty, and are to be sold at the most solemn sign of the Blue Bonnet, right opposite to the two Houses of Parliament, 1646." (See Tracts, vol. i. col. 4.)

† Baillie's Letters, vol. ii.

‡ Neal's History, vol. ii. p. 333.

"Directory for Public Worship." In 1647 it accepted the "Westminster Confession of Faith;" and in 1648 it ratified the Larger and Shorter Catechisms.* In all this it had shown a sacrificing spirit—it had thrown aside its own "Confession of Faith," and its own "Book of Common Order," both the legacy of Knox, that its Covenanted uniformity with England might be secured.† Of all the compilations of the Westminster Divines, the "Shorter Catechism" is undoubtedly the best. Its admirable method; the manner in which every question grows out of the answer which preceded it; its union of simplicity in statement with depth of doctrine, make it one of the most perfect of catechetical compositions. It has exerted a prodigious influence in moulding not merely the religious but the mental character of Scotland. Much of our metaphysics as well as of our theology is due to it.

The same Assembly which sanctioned the "Confession of Faith" had under its consideration a new metrical version of the psalms. Mr Rouse, a member of the English House of Commons, was the author of this version; but he had not disdained to borrow largely from a version at that period greatly despised, because it happened to bear the name of King James, but which was in reality the composition of Sir William Alexander of Menstrie, afterwards created Earl of Stirling. The Assembly appointed a committee to revise the poetical translation of Rouse, with instructions to make what use they could of the version of the Laird of Rowallan, and of Zachary Boyd, at that time well known to the lovers of sacred poesy. The result of their labours was that version of the psalms now sung every Sabbath in our churches, and which, though neither so classical in its lan-

* See the Acts of these Assemblies.

† The last reference which I have found to the Genevan liturgy is in the Acts of the Assembly, 1649, in which the Church petitions the parliament to give the sums which had hitherto been given to the readers (evidently of the Liturgy) to schoolmasters, now that the Directory for Public Worship had been adopted. Explicit mention of the Liturgy is avoided. Was this intentional? Had the Church become ashamed of it? (Peterkin, p. 553.) In Nichol's Diary for 1650, there is a notice, that the Directory having been introduced in 1646, the ministers now began to deliver lectures in place of the morning and evening prayers.

guage, nor so melodious in its measures as we would expect from the age which produced a "Paradise Lost," and "L'Allegro," is yet so terse, so true to the original, and so natural, as to be upon the whole the best poetical translation of the psalms of which the English literature can boast.* The present authorized version of the Bible had been published so early as 1611, under the paternal care of King James, and soon superseded the old Genevan translation, so that the Church of Scotland had now all those symbols of its faith and worship which are still so hallowed in our sight.

But the General Assembly still lacked catholicity of spirit. The Presbyterians in England were exhorted by their brethren in Scotland to use every effort to extirpate the sects which were so rapidly springing up in every part of the country. They were told that the unclean spirit which had been cast out was entering in again, with seven other spirits worse than himself; so that the latter end of England was like to be worse than the beginning. And, afraid lest the gangrene, as it was sometimes called, should spread northwards, an act was passed prohibiting all books in which the pestilent heresies of the Independents were maintained from entering the country.†

A.D. 1647. The summer and autumn of 1647 brought about revolutions in England which placed the king in the hands of the army, and laid the parliament prostrate at its feet. The people now found that they had evoked a spirit which they could not lay; and that military despotism was to be the first fruit of the civil war. The Scotch Estates, still loyal, toward the end of the year despatched the Earls of Loudon and Lanark to make a last effort to save the king. At Carisbrook Castle, the captive monarch, now sorely humbled, promised to give to the Solemn League and Covenant a parliamentary sanction, provided that none should be compelled to take it against

* They who wish to study the history of our psalmody must consult Baillie's Letters and Journals; together with a learned sketch in the Appendix to the Bannatyne Edition, by the editor, Mr David Laing. In the Edinburgh Christian Magazine there is also an interesting series of Papers upon this subject, understood to be from the pen of Mr Robertson of Monzievaird.

† See Acts of Assembly, 1647.

their wills; and to establish Presbytery in England for three years, provided that he and his household were allowed their own mode of worship; and after these three years, to establish permanently such a polity as the Westminster divines, with twenty commissioners of his nomination, should determine as most agreeable to the Word of God. These conditions were afterwards embodied in a treaty with the Scotch Estates, known as the Engagement.*

A.D. 1648. In March, the Estates met at Edinburgh; the commissioners gave an account of their embassage; and a resolution was agreed upon, by a large majority, to put the nation in a posture of defence. This resolution was not come to without trouble. The Commission of the Assembly—a body not constituted as at present, but composed of a nominated number—had for some years been rising into power, and now remonstrated violently against the proceedings of the parliament. They declared that the king's concessions were not enough. They held that Charles must not only take the Covenant himself, but compel all others to take it too; that he must not only establish Presbytery in England, but establish it permanently and at once, and become a Presbyterian himself.† The parliament had for some years been in pupilage to the Church, and tried on this occasion to humour it by concessions; but finding that no concession would do, it broke its yoke, and acted for itself. An army was raised, and the Duke of Hamilton placed at its head.

In the month of July the Assembly met, and gave its approval to the proceedings of its Commission, and showed itself disposed to defy the Parliament. It complained of the parliament entering into such an Engagement without its consent; it declared the oath which the parliament had imposed to be an unlawful snare, and prohibited the people from taking it; it maintained that to unite with malignants against sectaries was to join hands with a black devil to beat a white one; and proved this from the case of Asa and Benhadad, Ahaz and the King of Assyria, Jehoshaphat and

* See Rushworth's Collections. Clarendon's History, &c.

† Burnet's Memoirs, p. 339.

Achab; and finally threatened with the highest censure ministers who should not speak out against the acts of the legislature.* The pretensions of Hildebrand, which led to the war of investitures, were not so high as those of this conclave of presbyters in the Scottish Vatican.

The Marquis of Argyle, with the Earls of Cassillis and Eglinton, had always taken part with the rigid Covenanters: the Chancellor Loudon now ratted, reprobated a treaty which himself had devised, and did public penance for his backsliding in the High Church of Edinburgh. The army of the Engagers, ill disciplined and ill equipped, after dispersing an armed muster of the peasantry at Mauchline, penetrated into England, and, being encountered at Preston by the invincible battalions of Cromwell, was decisively defeated. Hamilton, who had showed himself incapable of command, was taken prisoner, and soon afterwards paid for his loyalty with his life.†

August 17.

When the news of this disaster reached Scotland, Argyle, Cassillis, and Eglinton assembled their vassals; the westland ministers combined with the westland nobles in calling the people to arms; crowds of excited Covenanters poured toward the capital; the Committee of Estates fled at their approach; and a change of the government was effected, which placed Argyle once more at the head of affairs. This was called the "Whiggamore's Raid," and originated the name by which one of the great political parties in the State is still known. The party in power hastened to make their peace with Cromwell, forgetful that they were pledged by their Covenant to extirpate all such sectaries as he. They placed Berwick and Carlisle in his hands, brought him to Edinburgh, and gave banquets in his honour. They showed, however, that their notions were as narrow as ever, by passing the Act of Classes, by which they excluded from all places of honour and trust every one who had taken any part in the Engagement. The consequence was, large numbers of ministers were deposed, the parliament was reduced to a fraction of its strength, and

* Peterkin's Records, p. 509.

† Burnet's Memoirs. Baillie's Letters, &c.

every statesman and every magistrate suspected of malignancy was driven from his post.*

On the 30th of January 1649, Charles was beheaded before his palace of Whitehall. He fell, like Louis XVI. in France, not because he was the worst or most despotic king whom England had seen, but simply because in his day despotic and democratic ideas came into collision. Both these monarchs were more virtuous and less violent than some of their predecessors; but they perished the victims of revolutions which could be satiated only with blood. We must pity their fate; but we may partly console ourselves with the reflection that their death has not been lost upon the world. It has taught many kings to be wise. The Episcopalians may well revere Charles as a martyr, for he threw away three crowns and his life in their cause.

So soon as the news of his execution reached Edinburgh, the Estates proclaimed his eldest son, Charles, king of Scotland. But their loyalty did not make them forget their Covenant. They passed an act, ordaining that he should not be admitted to the exercise of the sovereignty till he should swear to the Solemn League and Covenant, and consent that all civil matters should be ordered by the parliaments, and all ecclesiastical affairs by the Assembly of the Church. They despatched commissioners to the Hague, to declare their loyalty and explain their terms to the exiled prince. The prince at first thought that exile was better than the Covenant.

On the 7th of July the Assembly met. In their acts we have a strange mixture of the darkest fanaticism with the truest appreciation of constitutional freedom. They ordained that all who had been involved in the Engagement, or in any way expressed their approbation of it, should be regarded as malignants, and either submit to the ignominy of the Church's discipline, or endure the horrors of excommunication. They resolved that the army as well as the

* Lamont's Diary, Sept. and Oct. 1649. Kirkton's History, p. 48. Kirkton says, "Now the ministry was notably purified, the magistracy altered, and the people strangely refined. It is true, at this time hardly the fifth part of the lords of Scotland were admitted to sit in parliament; but those who did sit were esteemed truly godly men."

parliament should be purged of malignants. They declared that Charles II. must take the Covenant if he would reign over them. In short, all must think just as they thought; and though two watches have never been got to go exactly alike, all the minds of the nation must be made to keep time with the mind of the Church. Yet the same Assembly could give utterance to propositions which form the basis of the limited monarchy and the free constitution which we now enjoy.

A.D. 1650. In the beginning of 1650 Montrose landed in Scotland, anxious to make one effort more for the throne. The Estates, though recognising the king, could not recognise the general, as he had fallen away from the Covenant, and troops were instantly marched against him. His little army was beaten and dispersed, and he himself, after wandering about some days among the hills of Assynt, was betrayed and taken prisoner. He was carried to Edinburgh, condemned to death, conveyed through the crowded streets in an open cart driven by the executioner, and hanged upon a gallows thirty feet high.* His death has left a deep stain upon the character of all who were implicated in it—and many of the ministers were not free. They were now enjoying their day of power; but the scene was to be changed, and was it likely that Charles would forget Montrose?

Previous to the expedition of Montrose, a deputation from the Scotch Estates had waited upon the king at Breda, to urge him once more to accept the terms upon which they were willing to invest him with the supreme authority. Charles had hitherto cherished hopes that he might be restored to his thrones by a Royalist movement in Ireland; but every such hope had been dashed, and now Scotland held out to him the only chance of sovereignty which remained. The terms were hard; but he was not a man to stick at terms, and he gave them his consent. He promised to remove from the court all who had been excommunicated by the Church; to take the Solemn League and Covenant; to

* The Wigton Papers. Napier's Life and Times of Montrose. Balfour's Annals, &c.

ratify all acts of parliament enjoining it; to establish the Presbyterian government and worship; to practise the same in his own family; and to allow all civil matters to be determined in the parliament, and all ecclesiastical matters in the Assemblies of the Church. This done, the king set sail for Scotland, and reached the mouth of the Spey by the middle of June. He was not allowed to set his foot upon the shore till he had subscribed the Covenant, and, with all his profligacy of principle, he could not conceal his reluctance to do so. The Duke of Hamilton (whom we have previously known as the Earl of Lanark) and the Earl of Lauderdale were in his train; but it was intimated to them that they must begone, as they were implicated in the sinful Engagement. The Marquis of Argyle hastened to pay his respects to his sovereign; but it was soon evident, that, while he might give the badges of royalty to Charles, he was determined to keep the power to himself.*

Charles was now amongst Covenanters of the strictest sect, and it was necessary he should conform to their ways. "He wrought himself," says Burnet, "into as grave a deportment as he could; he heard many prayers and sermons, some of great length. I remember in one fast-day there were six sermons preached without intermission. I was there myself," says the bishop, "and not a little weary of so tedious a service." We shall not wonder that the king was weary too, when we hear that the blood-guiltiness of his father and the idolatry of his mother sometimes formed the principal subjects of discourse. Charles would have liked a quiet walk on the Sunday afternoon, but this was forbidden; he would have enjoyed a dance or a game at cards, for he had been accustomed to these things when an exile; but he could not have them when he was king.† Every morning and every evening, throughout the whole week, there was a lecture, and we may be sure that the monarch was not often allowed to be absent.‡

But the worst was coming. The king was asked to sign

* Burnet's Memoirs, p. 422. Cook's History, vol. iii.

† Burnet's History of his own Times, pp. 57, 58.

‡ Trail's MS. Cook's History, vol. iii. p. 191.

a declaration in which he professed himself to be deeply humbled in the sight of God for his father's opposition to the Solemn League and Covenant, by which so much of the blood of the Lord's people had been shed, and for the idolatry of his mother, and its toleration in the king's house; and that he himself had subscribed the Covenant sincerely, and not from any sinister intention or crooked design.* This document had been drawn up by the Commission of the Church, and ratified by the Committee of Estates; and when presented to the king for his signature, he was shocked at the words which it put into his mouth. He was plainly told, however, that unless he subscribed they would not espouse his quarrel. Charles II. was a different man from Charles I. The father's conscience perpetually came in the way of compromise; the son had no conscience at all, when concessions, however base, promised to secure some important end. At Dunfermline, on the 16th of August, he put his name to the paper. Was it not too bad that the ministers of religion should compel the unprincipled youth to break the first commandment with promise, by casting public dishonour on his father and mother? They knew he was not sincere. They had blamed the sire for yielding nothing; they had now got a son who would yield everything. He seemed to be sent by Providence to teach them the folly of concussing the conscience.

When it was known in England that Charles II. had landed in Scotland, Cromwell instantly marched northwards with those warriors who had never shown their back to any foe. But the Scots were prepared for his coming, and an array of thirty or forty thousand men was gathered around the metropolis. It was resolved that the army of sectaries should be opposed by an army of saints. The Scottish musters were drawn out on Leith Links, and purged of every one who was suspected of Malignancy, or had taken part in the Engagement. The purgation went on day after day, and upwards of eighty officers and several thousand

* Balfour's Annals, vol. iv. p. 92. A copy of the document will be found in the curious tract called "Eschol Grapes, or Some of the Ancient Boundaries and Covenanted March Stones."

men were struck from the strength of the army.* Every one, from the commander-in-chief to the drummer-boy, behoved to be a Covenanter, without the least spot or blemish of Malignancy. Some of the nobles and gentry who had been involved in the Engagement offered their services to hang upon Cromwell's rear, since they were forbidden to act with their more orthodox countrymen; but the preachers declared that the least compliance of this kind would bring the judgments of God upon the land.†

After some skirmishes in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, Cromwell found himself beset with such difficulties that he was constrained to retreat southwards toward Dunbar. The Scots followed hard upon his heels. Cromwell had some thoughts of embarking his troops and returning to England by sea; but the Scots had taken up a position on a hill which rendered such an operation difficult and dangerous, and besides, they had taken possession of the passes between Dunbar and Berwick. "Because of our weakness, because of our strait," wrote Cromwell, when all was over, "we were in the mount, and in the mount the Lord would be seen, and would find out a way of deliverance and salvation for us."‡ After Cromwell and his officers had thus sought the Lord in the mount, they were walking in the Earl of Roxburgh's gardens, and through their telescopes they observed a great motion in the Scottish camp. "They are coming down to us; God is delivering them into our hands!"§ cried Oliver, with the strong confidence of a man who had never lost a battle. They did come down; the caution of Lesley had been overborne by the fanaticism of those who surrounded him; and on the 3d of September they fell in thousands before the sword of the sectaries. It was perhaps well that the illiberal spirit of the Covenanting

* Balfour's Annals, vol. iv. Nichol's Diary, 25th July 1650. Sir Edward Walker's Historical Discourse. Peterkin's Records. "Articles for Purging the Army" may be seen in "Eschol Grapes."

† Sir Edward Walker's Historical Discourse. Peterkin's Records, p. 623.

‡ Cromwell's Letter to Mr Speaker Lenthall, 4th September 1650. Harris's Life of Cromwell, pp. 244, 245.

§ Burnet's Times, vol. i. p. 57.

host should have been thus sternly rebuked; but it did them no good; for, on the day of fasting proclaimed on account of the defeat, they, amongst other causes of a like kind, ascribed their disaster to the allowing a most malignant and profane guard of horse to be about the king, and to fight in his cause.*

After this decisive victory Cromwell marched upon Edinburgh, and then, proceeding westward, visited Linlithgow, Kilsyth, and Glasgow. The discipline of the Puritan army was so strict that few had to complain of any injury done them by the victorious troopers. In accordance with his principles, Cromwell made it known to the ministers that they might go on with their worship, and would meet with no disturbance; but in Glasgow and other places most of them fled at his approach, lest contact with him might bring upon them the taint of Malignancy. Stout Zachary Boyd, however, kept his ground, and in the High Church of Glasgow railed against Cromwell and his sectaries to their face.†

The spirit which animated the host scattered at Dunbar was high; but there was a spirit higher still in the State. There were some who had never been satisfied with the king. It was true he had granted all that they desired—signed every paper laid before him—professed himself willing to do anything; but they declared it was all hypocrisy; and it was not easy to answer them, for there was truth in what they said. Defeat, instead of producing union, created exasperation, and led to division. The opinions we have referred to now became the war-cry of a party strong in the west country; and led by Gillespie and Colonel Strachan—a man whose pretensions to surpassing sanctity made people remember rather than forget that his youth had been devoted to lewdness‡—in the month of October they directed a remonstrance to the Committee of Estates, in which they reckoned among the sins of the land the treaty with the king, as he had as yet given no evidence of a real change; and declared that the Lord had a controversy with them,

* Balfour's Annals, vol. iv. pp. 102–7.

† Baillie's Letters, vol. iii. p. 119.

‡ Ibid. pp. 112, 113.

both because of this, and because some malignant and profane persons were still allowed to remain in the court, in the judicatories, and in the army.* The menacing tone of this document received meaning from the fact that Strachan was at the head of a considerable body of troops, and seemed inclined to wage war both against the English sectaries and the Scotch Covenanters. He was attacked, however, near Hamilton, by a division of the Puritan army, and defeated, and it was felt that by this the teeth of the Remonstrance were broken. Strachan himself joined Cromwell, and his party was dispersed; but their opinions still lingered in the land. They were called REMONSTRANTS, and we shall hear of them again.

Meanwhile, the king grew weary of the restraints imposed upon him, and, giving his keepers the slip, fled from Perth, crossed the Tay, and rode rapidly to the north, to which he had been invited by some of his friends. But finding that he could expect no effective support, he quietly returned, after an absence of two days. This runaway affair was called the "start," and, though rash and foolish, led to some improvement in the king's condition. He was henceforward allowed to preside in his council, and steps were taken to have him solemnly crowned at Scone.

A.D. 1651. The 1st of January 1651 was fixed for the coronation, and, according to the custom of the time, two days of fasting were held throughout the country toward the end of December—the first for the general contempt of the gospel; the second for the sins of the king and his father's house. When the day came, the crown was placed upon Charles' head by the Marquis of Argyle, with all the usual solemnities of such an occasion,—the king, with uplifted hand, taking the usual oaths, and the nobles, upon bended knees, rendering the customary homage.†

While the king was being crowned at Scone, all the country south of the Forth was in the hands of the English sectaries—the castle of Stirling forming the frontier fortress

* A copy of this Remonstrance will be found in Balfour, vol. iv., and also in Peterkin, p. 604.

† Lamont's Diary. Baillie's Letters, vol. iii. Cook's History, vol. iii.

of the royalists. The army of Lesley had been scattered at Dunbar, the host of Strachan at Hamilton, and the operations of the recruiting serjeant were sorely circumscribed by the Act of Classes. The half of the population had in some one way or another incurred the taint of Malignancy, and none of these might shoulder a musket for their country in her extreme need. Every sensible, and every patriotic man, began to cry out against this suicidal absurdity. The king complained that those who were most attached to his person were debarred from his presence, and even forbidden to shed their blood in his cause. Some of the ministers complained that the Church was ruined by its own divisions, and that Presbytery was trampled in the dust by sectaries. There was a wide-spread wish for the repeal, or at least for the modification of the Act of Classes, so that every gallant man might have it in his power to serve his country.

The matter was brought before the Committee of Estates so early as the 4th of December 1650. But it was felt that it would be dangerous to do anything without the approbation of the Church, which ruled all things, civil as well as sacred. The Moderator of the General Assembly was therefore requested to call a meeting of the Commission at Perth, that it might give its advice in the matter.* Meanwhile, the subject was debated among the ministers themselves, and there was a pretty general opinion that Malignants might be admitted to serve as common soldiers, provided they made a public profession of their repentance; but that all the officers should be men upon whom the odious stigma had never been affixed.† When the Commission met on the 14th of the month, the parliament proposed the following question for its solution:—"What persons are to be admitted to rise in arms, and to join with the forces of the kingdom, and in what capacity, for defence thereof, against the armies of the sectaries, who, contrary to the Solemn League and Covenant and treaties, have most unjustly invaded, and are destroying the kingdom?" The Commission answered, "In this case of so great and ardent necessity we cannot be against the raising of all fencible persons in the land, and

* Balfour, vol. iv. p. 197. † Baillie's Letters, vol. iii. pp. 125, 126.

permitting them to fight against this enemy for defence of the kingdom; excepting such as are excommunicated, forfeited, notoriously profane, flagitious, or such as have been from the beginning, or continue still, and are at this time obstinate and professed enemies and opposers of the Covenant and cause of God."*

As the resolution of the Commission implied that all who had been deprived of Church privileges for their Malignancy should submit to Church discipline before they could enlist, the churches were now filled with men in sackcloth making a mock penitence. Some who had fought with the gallant Marquis of Montrose; many who had fled in the rout of the army of the Engagers, took their place at the church-doors, that by submitting to this humiliation they might once more follow the exciting fortunes of the war.† The Earl of Lauderdale, the Earl of Crawford, and some other nobles, put on sackcloth for their imputed sins, now when this door of return was opened to them. Favour was shown to the Royalists rather than the Remonstrants, as the following curious notice in Balfour appears to testify:—"12th January, Sunday.—This day Lieutenant-General Middleton was relaxed from his excommunication, and did his penance in sackcloth in Dundee Church; and Colonel Archibald Strachan was excommunicated, and delivered to the devil in the Church of Perth by Mr Alexander Rollock the same day."‡ General Middleton had been involved in a Royalist rising in the north; and Strachan, it will be remembered was at the head of the Remonstrant rising in the west.

The ministers were not unanimous in regard to these healing measures. Many cried out vehemently against them as a surrender of all that was sacred—as a lowering of a Covenanted state to the level of the world. Several presbyteries deprecated the step which had been taken. The Commission vindicated its conduct.§ Pamphlets appeared upon both sides, and the *odium theologicum* was increased

* Wodrow's History of the Sufferings of the Church of Scotland, Introduction, vol. i. p. 2, Dr Burns' edition.

† Burnet's Memoirs, p. 425; Times, vol. i. p. 58. See also Sir James Turner's Memoirs.

‡ Balfour's Annals, vol. iv. p. 240.

§ Ibid., pp. 284–95.

by the number of Malignants who were now raised to colonelcies in the army. But the parliament was resolved to take still another step, and now propounded to the Commission, whether they might not admit to the Committee of Estates such as had been excluded from it, provided they first gave satisfaction to the Church for their offence? The Commission gave a very guarded answer, but an answer which implied that under certain restrictions the thing might be done.* This was all that the parliament wished; and on the last day of May it rescinded the Act of Classes, one of the most bigoted and illiberal pieces of legislation which ever disgraced the statute-book of any country.† In the month of July following the General Assembly met and gave the stamp of its approbation to the proceedings of its Commission. But a protest, signed by twenty-two ministers, was given in against its lawfulness, on the ground that both the king and the Commission had interfered with its constitution. Three of the leading protesters were deposed; and from this time the Church was torn into two factions—hating and hated—which communicated the virulence of their feelings to the whole country.‡ Those who adhered to the resolutions of the Commission and the Assembly were called RESOLUTIONERS; those who protested against them were called PROTESTERS. At the head of the first were Douglas, Baillie, and Dickson; at the head of the second, Patrick Gillespie, James Guthrie, and Samuel Rutherford.

The armies of the king and Cromwell were again in motion. Charles had taken up a strong position near Stirling, and Cromwell, thinking it dangerous to attack him, turned his position, crossed the Forth at Queensferry, and pushing on to Perth, took easy possession of it. Charles now resolved to carry the war into England. Breaking up his camp, he began a rapid march southward, and Cromwell, hearing of this movement, instantly gave chase. The hostile armies met at Worcester, and there Cromwell obtained "his crown-

* Wodrow, vol. i. p. 3. † Balfour, vol. iv. pp. 296, 297.

‡ See Peterkin's Records for an account of this Assembly; but its Acts have not been preserved, and no Assembly after 1649 till the Revolution is recognised as lawful.

ing mercy." It was on the 3d of September the battle was fought—Cromwell's lucky day; the day on which he had conquered at Dunbar; the day on which he afterwards died. Charles fled from the field, and after skulking about the country for some time in disguise, managed to escape to France. Cromwell commissioned General Monk to complete the subjugation of Scotland, and he did it more effectually, though less cruelly, than had Edward I. For nine years Presbyterian Scotland was little better than a province of Puritanic England.

On the 21st of July 1652 the General Assembly again met; and again the Anti-Resolutioners protested against its authority. The Assembly vindicated its lawfulness, and threatened the Protesters with the discipline of the Church, unless they withdrew from their protests. Once more, in July 1653, the Assembly met, to meet no more for many sad years. When the Moderator was in the act of calling the roll, Colonel Cotterel entered the church, which he had already surrounded by a troop of horse and a company of musketeers, and demanded of the ministers by whose authority they met —by the authority of the parliament of the Commonwealth of England, or by authority of the Scottish judges? The Moderator replied, that they were an ecclesiastical synod, and meddled not with civil affairs; that they met by the authority of Jesus Christ and the laws of the land; and that the English army, by the Solemn League and Covenant, were pledged to maintain their privileges. The English colonel told them they must begone. The Moderator asked to be allowed to pray, and began; but the soldier, though a Puritan, grew weary, and told him he must stop and go at once. When the ministers, mourning over the violence done to their Zion by the triumphant sectaries, were come to the door of the church, they were placed between two files of soldiers, marched through the town to the Port, and then ordered to disperse and never to meet again.*

* Lamont's Diary. Baillie's Letters, vol. iii. p. 225. It is in an interesting letter to Mr Calamy that Baillie gives an account of this matter. The Assembly made one more attempt to meet, but were dispersed before they were constituted.

Though the English Puritans thus put down the General Assembly, they did not interfere with the meetings of kirk-sessions, presbyteries, and synods. They seldom disturbed the established worship. In a few cases they broke in upon the devotions of the ministers who ventured to pray for the king. On one occasion they laid hold of some north-country ministers, and having charged them with desecrating the Sabbath by travelling upon it, had the impudence to mulct them in forty shillings. They had a special contempt for the stool of repentance which stood in every church. In some instances they broke it down; in others they gravely took their seat upon it during the time of sermon, to show their scorn for what they considered as the Presbyterian ordinance of penance.* Of course, as often as they believed themselves moved, they preached themselves, to the great horror of the regularly ordained presbyters. But these things were trifles, and did not seriously wound the religious feelings of the people. The strict military discipline which was engrafted on their puritanic piety prevented them from running into many excesses, or trampling on the rights of the nation they had conquered. A few stray notices in our session records show that they were men of like passions with ourselves, and that the sternness of their virtue sometimes yielded to the fascinations of Covenanted maidens. But in general they were well-behaved and exemplary, and perhaps never did another victorious army use its power with such moderation. Scotland, instead of being beggared, was enriched by the invasion of Cromwell.

The bitterness which existed between the Resolutioners and Protesters increased instead of abating. The Resolutioners embraced the great majority of the clergy; but the Protesters, from affecting a greater fervour of devotion, were the greatest favourites with the people. They were peculiarly vehement in their sermons and prayers, and spoke as if they were ventriloquists, or, to give the description of Baillie, they had "a strange kind of sighing, the like whereof I had never heard, as a pythonising out of the belly of a second person."† The people responded to their preaching

* Lamont's Diary. Peterkin, p. 656. † Letters, &c., vol. iii. p. 245.

by groans and sighs. They ordained that the sacrament of the Supper should be dispensed every month ; but in general they cut off one-half of the communicants as unworthy, and in some cases where the magistrates or principal men were esteemed guilty of what was called defection, they gave the communion to none. It is to these Protesters we owe our sacramental fasts ; for such days of fasting were unknown to their time. On the fast-day, sermon after sermon was kept up for eight or ten hours together. On the Saturday, two or three preparation-sermons were preached. On the Sabbath, the solemn services were protracted during the whole day. On the Monday, three or four thanksgiving-sermons concluded the season devoted to communion. On such occasions eight or ten ministers were brought together, and the services of all were required. The people flocked in crowds from the neighbouring parishes, till the church could not hold them, and they were compelled to meet in the churchyard ; and those scenes were begun which continued almost to our day, but which now, under the sting of the satirist and the good sense of the community, have all but disappeared.*

In those districts of the country where the Protesters were numerous the wranglings in the Church Courts were interminable and intolerable. In some instances the two factions broke off from one another, and constituted themselves into separate courts. The Protesters had the greater antipathy to the king, and the greater favour for the Commonwealth ; and therefore they could always count upon the support of the Lord Protector and his troopers. They deposed some ministers who were not like-minded with themselves ; with the help of the soldiery they intruded others upon parishes, against the united will of the heritors and people. Several of their leaders managed to secure lucrative places for themselves in the principal universities, and Resolutioners were turned out to make way for them. The Resolutioners retaliated where they could. Altogether, the condition of the country was sad enough. Unchristian animosities reigned in the Church ; English garrisons held the forts ; and the

* Burnet's History, vol. i. p. 67. Kirkton's History, pp. 54, 55. Baillie's Letters, &c., vol. iii.

nobility were almost to a man overwhelmed in debt, and filled with unhappy jealousies.*

Some poetic chroniclers have depicted this as the golden age in the history of our Church's piety. "Then was Scotland," says Kirkton, "a heap of wheat set about with lilies, uniform, or a palace of silver beautifully proportioned, and this seems to me to have been Scotland's high noon." Not an oath, we are told, was to be heard; not a child was to be found but could read its Bible; not a family in which the worship of God was not observed.† Unfortunately we are awakened from this pleasing dream to the reality of things by stubborn facts which cannot be gainsaid. We read in another chronicle of a man being scourged at the Cross of Edinburgh for such an accumulation of debaucheries as, we would fain hope, is unknown in our day;‡ we read of a noble lord dying a bachelor, and yet leaving sixty-seven descendants behind him;§ we read of an ordinance forbiding females to serve in taverns, on account of the scandals which had arisen from such fair servitors waiting upon drunken men;‖ and in all the ecclesiastical records of the time we have very many and very sad proofs that vice was still known in the land. Ignorance was known too; and in some districts the ability to read appears to have been the exception rather than the rule.¶

At the same time it is quite certain that religion had taken a firm hold upon the popular mind. The characteristic of that period was religion. The ministers, in general, were come of respectable families, were possessed of a fair share of learning, and were entirely devoted to their pastoral

* Baillie's Letters, *passim*, 1654–5, vol. iii.

† Kirkton's History, pp. 48–50.

‡ Lamont's Diary. "Feb. 1650. About the same tyme, ther was one scourged by the hangman for having seven wumen at one tyme with chielde."

§ Balfour's Annals, vol. iii. p. 423. He refers to Patrick Lesley, Lord Lindores.

‖ Nichol's Diary, March 1650. Lord Loudon and Samuel Rutherford did not escape suspicion.

¶ In the Record of the Presbytery of Perth, 28th March 1649, there is the following significant entry:—"List of the families wherein *some of them* can read within the following parishes—viz., Scone, 25; Drone, 36; Dumbarny, 55; St Madoes, 9; Rhind, 25; Kinnoul, 18; St Martin's, 13; Redgorton, 9; Arngask, 16; Abernethy, 100." (See Peterkin's Records.)

work. By their preaching and by their catechizing they laid the foundation of that almost universal intelligence in regard to religious subjects which is still characteristic of the Scottish people. The religious excitement of the period infected all, and we may be sure that the subjects debated in presbyteries and synods between Remonstrants, Protesters, and Resolutioners, or in garrison towns between Anabaptists, Ranters, and Quakers, were debated too at the firesides of the peasantry. The religious development in the national cranium became larger than ever; and opinions and observances still alive had then their birth. But with all this vitality, there was an utter want of that loving, liberal spirit which is the highest phase of the religious life.

On the 3d of September 1658 the great Protector of England breathed his last; and the sovereign power which he had won and retained by the sword passed into the hands of his eldest son. But Richard Cromwell was not a man to keep in awe the strong spirits which twenty years of civil war and military rule had evoked; and, after a few months of precarious authority, he ungrudgingly resigned the supreme power and retired into private life. The government of the country again passed into the hands of a military junto,—every ambitious officer began to dream he might be king,—and anarchy and despotism were likely to be the result. General Monk, in Scotland, beheld what was passing in London, and keeping his counsel to himself, began his march southwards in the month of November 1659, to decide that Charles should sit upon the throne, as the legions stationed in Gaul had anciently determined, on more occasions than one, who should wear the imperial purple at Rome.

CHAPTER V.

GENERAL MONK had hardly reached London when James Sharp, minister of Crail, and professor of theology at St Andrews, began his journey thither, commissioned by some of the leading Scotch ministers to watch over the interests of their Church at this crisis in the country's fate. He regularly reported his proceedings to Robert Douglas, at that period the man most respected of all in the Church of Scotland. From his letters, we find him at one time closeted with Monk; at another, visiting members of parliament; at another, talking over their prospects with the Presbyterian ministers of London; and then, about the beginning of May, starting for Breda to offer his congratulations to Charles on his being proclaimed King of England, Scotland, and Ireland. By his first instructions he was requested to press the covenanted uniformity of religion between the two nations;* and the Long Parliament, before its dissolution, once more declared for the Westminster Confession, and ordered the Solemn League and Covenant to be set up in every church, and read by the minister once every year. But when the new parliament met, it soon became apparent that the face of things would be changed. The tide of feeling in favour of Episcopacy now rose so high that it was evident it would soon overflow all England. Sharp intimated this to his friends, but he suggests no suspicion that it might probably be extended to Scotland.†

* This is not mentioned in his formal instructions, but it is referred to in his correspondence with Douglas. (See the Introduction to Wodrow's History.)

† Extracts from the letters to which reference is made are printed in the Introduction to Wodrow's History.

England, wearied of the Commonwealth, clamoured for a king as earnestly as did Israel when tired of its Judges; and God sent them Charles, a greater plague than ever was Saul to the Jews. The parliament had it in its power to have limited the monarchy; and the man who had accepted the crown of Scotland upon such humiliating terms would have submitted to any conditions which England chose to dictate. But the nation was drunk with a Royalist joy; and after having bought its liberty with its blood at Marston and Worcester, it now willingly gave itself back into slavery. On the 29th of May 1660, Charles II. entered London in triumph; and the Londoners were once more pleased with the pageant of royalty. Capital cities, though sometimes seized with revolutionary spasms, are in general attached to monarchy; for they witness the splendour of courts, and feed upon the crumbs which fall from imperial tables. Rural districts are attached to monarchy too; for the tenant still follows the faith of his lord, as the vassal did once upon a time. It is in villages and towns that democracy and republicanism are to be found.

Scotland had ever been loyal. It had been deprived of its king, but it had never renounced him, and had submitted with reluctance to the domination of the Protector. It was meet, therefore, that it should rejoice. The 19th of June was kept at Edinburgh as a day of thanksgiving for the Restoration. The sermons were followed by banqueting and bonfires. At the Cross a table was spread for the magistrates; and barrels of wine were poured forth, and three hundred dozen of glasses were smashed in drinking the king's health. The Castle-hill had its display of fire-works; and, to the great delight of the citizens, in the midst of these was seen Oliver Cromwell pursued by the devil; and the delight was increased when both Cromwell and the devil were blown into the air.* The other towns of Scotland imitated the loyalty of the metropolis. Such a loyal country deserved a loving king.

The Scottish nobles hastened to London to pay their respects to the king; and among these went Argyle. He

* Wodrow's History, vol. i. p. 62.

had long been the leading man among the Covenanters—he had commanded their armies and guided their councils; but still he had placed the Scottish crown upon Charles's head. As soon as it was known that he was in London, he was seized, and committed to the Tower. This was upon the 8th of July; and upon the 14th orders came down to Major-General Morgan, commanding in Scotland, to secure Sir James Stuart, the provost of Edinburgh, Sir Archibald Johnston of Warriston, and Sir John Chiesly of Carswell. Stuart and Chiesly were got hold of; but Warriston fled, and a reward was offered for his apprehension.* This was the beginning of sorrows.

The Earl of Glencairn was now raised to the office of chancellor of the kingdom, and the government entrusted to the Committee of Estates nominated by the parliament of 1651. On the 23d of August the committee held its first meeting under the presidency of Glencairn. On the same day a number of ministers of the Remonstrant party, among whom was James Guthrie, met in a private house in Edinburgh, to draw up a supplication to be laid before the king, congratulating him upon his restoration, expressing their unfeigned loyalty, putting him in mind of his own and the nation's Covenant with the Lord, hinting that if it were broken curses would follow, and praying that his reign might be like that of David, Solomon, Jehoshaphat, and Hezekiah. By an order from the Committee of Estates, all assembled were arrested, and sent prisoners to the Castle.†

On the last day of August Sharp arrived from London, bringing with him a letter from the king. It was directed to Douglas, to be communicated to the Presbytery of Edinburgh. On the 3d September the presbytery met, and the king's letter was read. In this document Charles declared, —"We do resolve to protect and preserve the government of the Church of Scotland as it is settled by law, without violation, and to countenance in the due exercise of their functions all such ministers who shall behave themselves

* Kirkton's History, p. 70. Wodrow, vol. i. pp. 63, 64.

† Kirkton's History, p. 73. Burnet's History of his Own Times, vol. i. pp. 121, 122.

dutifully and peaceably, as becomes men of their calling. We will also take care that the authority and acts of the General Assembly at St Andrews and Dundee, 1651, be owned and stand in force until we shall call another General Assembly (which we purpose to do as soon as our affairs will permit); and we do intend to send for Mr Robert Douglas and some other ministers, that we may speak with them in what may further concern the affairs of that Church." Nothing could have been more satisfactory than this letter. The Presbytery of Edinburgh accordingly ordered copies of it to be transmitted to all the presbyteries of the Church, as being of public concern, and appointed a committee to write the king expressing their thankfulness. They went further —they purchased a silver box in which they enshrined the precious document. The historian Kirkton declares that the Protesters smiled, and said to their brethren that they were bad grammarians in taking the infinitive mood for the indicative, and that nothing more was meant than that the king would support the form of church government which was established by law, whatever it might be.* No grammarian could so construe the king's sentences; but time proved that the Protesters were right in so construing the king's mind.

During the autumn of the year, several ministers were cast into prison for sentiments which they were alleged to have uttered in the pulpit; and it was felt that a change was approaching. In fact, a change was already come. The nobility had hitherto stood fast by the Church; but when they returned from court, to which most of them had resorted, their talk was no longer of the obligations of the Covenant, but of the claims of the law. Nor were their manners improved. The Presbyterian chronicler declares that one would have thought they had been in another world, where men change their genius for the worse.† Most of the clergy, too, had come down from the high ground which they once occupied; ten years of bitters had given to their feelings a more healthy tone; but there is no foundation for the belief that any considerable

* Kirkton, p. 75. Wodrow, vol. i. pp. 80, 81. † Kirkton, pp. 77, 78.

number of them sought for peace in the bosom of Episcopacy.

On the last day of the year the Earl of Middleton came down to Scotland as Royal Commissioner. He was a soldier of fortune; had served under both Covenanting and Royalist banners, and had the rough manners, imperious ways, and violent temper of the soldiers of those days.

On the 1st of January 1661 the parliament met. According to the laudable custom of the realm, there was a "riding;" and "there," says Kirkton, "you might have seen them who some weeks before were companions to owls, hiding themselves from messengers pursuing them for debt, vapouring in scarlet and ermine, upon good hopes to be all men of gold.* The parliament proved itself as compliant as Scottish parliaments were wont to be. It was as industrious as parliament could be. In its first session it passed sixty-four acts relating to public affairs. It bowed itself before the prerogative, strengthened it by laws, and framed an oath of allegiance which any person might be required to swear, acknowledging the king to be supreme over all persons and in all causes. It forbade the Covenant to be renewed. It appointed the 29th of May to be kept in all time coming as a holiday, in memory of his Majesty's restoration—a thing hateful to the Presbyterians, who abominated all holidays together. But if this parliament could make laws, it could also unmake them. It passed with wonderful unanimity the famous Rescissory Act, by which it destroyed at one fell swoop all the legislation of the last twenty years.† The effect of this act was, that the Presbyterian polity ceased to be the polity of the Established Church, and the old laws in favour of Episcopacy came into force. This was seen and designed; but his Majesty, "sensible of the mercies of Almighty God toward him, and desirous to improve these mercies to the glory of God and honour of His great name," passed an act declaring that he would make it his care "to settle the government of the Church in such a frame as should be most agreeable to the Word of

* Kirkton, p. 87.

† See Murray's Collection of the Acts of the Scottish Parliament.

God, most suitable to the monarchical government, and most complying with the public peace and quiet of the kingdom; and in the meantime allowed the present administration by sessions, presbyteries, and synods."*

Most marvellous it is that the men who had borne aloft the banners of the Covenant could do these things! But men are blindly inconsistent. This same parliament passed acts against Sabbath profanation, swearing, and drunkenness, and yet it was known among the people by the name of "Middleton's Drinking Parliament." Burnet tells that the Rescissory Act was first suggested as a joke, and afterwards resolved upon at a drinking bout; and Kirkton declares that the Royal Commissioner sometimes came to the Parliament House in such a state, that after some significant whispering among the members, the president was obliged to make some pretence to adjourn. The moral laws of the legislature were unheeded, but its immoral example extended to all ranks. It was thought necessary now to get drunk, and swear, and brawl, and fight, to prove one's self a loyal subject. The nation swung violently from the austerities of the Covenant to the most reckless and unprincipled dissipation.

The Presbyterian clergy saw the Rescissory Act passed into a law with alarm; but most of them were afraid to speak out, for the palmy days of plain speaking were gone. However, the Church did not allow herself to be robbed of her privileges in silence. The Presbytery of Edinburgh, the Synod of Glasgow, the Synod of Fife, the Synod of Galloway, remonstrated against the overthrow of the Church's polity. In some cases the proceedings of the ecclesiastical courts were disturbed and overborne by nobles commissioned by the parliament;† in all cases, men's hearts were failing them for fear.

Toward the close of 1660 the Marquis of Argyle had been brought down from the Tower, and committed to the Castle of Edinburgh. On the 15th of February 1661 he was brought to the bar of the parliament, accused of high treason.

* See Murray's Collection of the Acts of the Scottish Parliament.

† Wodrow's History, vol. i.

His indictment consisted of fourteen articles, and related chiefly to his conduct during the period of the civil wars and the Commonwealth, his burning the house of Airlie, besieging the Castle of Dumbarton, delivering the king to the English at Newcastle, protesting against the Engagement, consenting to the murder of the Marquis of Montrose, corresponding with Cromwell, sitting in his parliament, advising him that his only safety lay in putting the king to death. Argyle denied some of the charges brought against him; and in regard to the others, pled that he acted under the orders of the Committee of Estates, or that his conduct was covered by the king's Act of Indemnity. It was certain that he had taken a part in the civil wars, and that he had yielded compliance to the Commonwealth; but the same thing was true of almost every man in the kingdom. It was true of Monk, who had restored Charles to the throne; it was true of Middleton, who acted as the royal commissioner; it was true of the advocate who conducted the prosecution; it was true of most of those who sat on the judgment-seat while Argyle stood at the bar. Was it fair that the one should be punished, while the others were honoured? Might not Charles have forgotten all and forgiven all, and felt that his throne was firmer because it was founded upon mercy? But he was not the man to do this; and Argyle was singled out as the victim, to suffer for the sins of the whole nation.

On the 25th of May he received his sentence. The house was very thin, for all seemed anxious to wash their hands of his blood except the minions of the government. Kneeling at the bar, he heard the horrid doom of the traitor pronounced upon him, and then quietly said, "I had the honour to set the crown upon the king's head, and now he hastens me away to a better crown than his own." From this moment his character appears to be changed. From being so timid that he skulked from the battle-field, he now looked forward to his fate with the most perfect composure; and when we visit his dungeon, we feel ourselves in the presence of the martyr about to die for his religion, and not of the rebel about to suffer for his crimes. When going to

the scaffold, he remarked, "I could die like a Roman, but I choose rather to die like a Christian;" and like a Christian he did die.*

But justice was not yet appeased, and another life must be taken. James Guthrie, the minister of Stirling, was brought up for trial on the 20th of February, charged with high treason. He was accused of taking a leading part in the western Remonstrance; of publishing a seditious book, entitled "The Causes of God's Wrath;" of writing and subscribing a paper, called "The Humble Petition" of the 23d of August last; of convocating the king's lieges on several occasions, without warrant or authority; and of declining the king as his judge in regard to sentiments uttered in the pulpit. For these things he was condemned to die. It was a cruel sentence. Guthrie certainly held extreme opinions in religious matters, and a man's religion in those days was not different from his politics; but surely he had done nothing worthy of death. One thing, however, he had done, which may be the secret of his end: he had pronounced a sentence of excommunication on Middleton, and it was thought by many that private malice had sharpened the edge of public justice. Guthrie died as became him. He addressed the crowd at great length from the ladder, and went from this world in the firm hope of a better.† The truth is, the end of these men gives them a hold upon our sympathies which otherwise they would never have possessed. We have no sympathy with James Guthrie at the head of the fanatic Remonstrants, but we have both sympathy and respect for him as one of the leaders in our noble army of martyrs. The vindictiveness of the apostate government of Charles has raised him to a position in our history which, had he been left to run his course, he would not have held.‡

The manes of the dead Charles and the wounded honour

* Crookshanks' History of the Church of Scotland, vol. i. pp. 81–90. See also "Napthali, or the Wrestlings of the Church of Scotland," Wodrow, Kirkton, &c.

† Burnet's History, vol. i. p. 138. Napthali. Wodrow.

‡ Baillie's Letters, &c., vol. iv. p. 467. It was thus he was regarded by the more devout men of his own day. "Though few approved his way, yet many were grieved to see a minister so severely used."

of the living one had now had two victims sacrificed to them—one of the leading nobles, and one of the leading ministers. It seemed as if it had been designed to strike terror into all by these two terrible examples. But still another life was taken. One Govan was hanged at the same time as Guthrie. He was charged with being on the scaffold when Charles was beheaded; but this he is said to have clearly disproved. He had, however, borne arms with the Remonstrants, and this was enough. His fate exhibits the caprices of fortune in the midst of anarchy. "The Commissioner and I," said he, when standing under the gibbet, "went out to the fields together for one cause. I have now the cord about my neck, and he is promoted to be his Majesty's Commissioner; yet for a thousand worlds I would not change lots with him!"*

It is probable that Samuel Rutherford would have shared the fate of Guthrie had not death anticipated the hangman. His "Lex Rex" was burned by the hands of the executioner. Patrick Gillespie was saved by powerful friends and humiliating retractations.† Other ministers were driven from their parishes, or cast into prison, or banished the kingdom, and none knew but that his turn might come next. It was upon the Remonstrant and Protesting party that the blow fell heaviest, for they had held the most violent opinions. A bribe, however, could do much. The Lord Advocate was notoriously open to corruption; and a purse of gold, seasonably presented, had a magic power in averting a prosecution.‡

Something must now be done toward settling the government of the Church. The parliament had left this matter in the hands of the king, and the king took the opinion of such of his Scotch counsellors as were then in London. It was important to ascertain the feelings of the nation. Middleton

* Wodrow, vol. i.

† "Mr Rutherford, had not death prevented, was in the same hazard. Mr Gillespie had gone the same gate, had not his friends persuaded him to recant his Remonstrance, Protestation, compliance with the English, and to petition the king and parliament for mercy," &c. (Baillie's Letters, &c., vol. iv. p. 467.)

‡ Kirkton's History.

declared that the larger and more intelligent portion of the community were in favour of Episcopacy; Sharp declared that none but the Protesters were against it; Lauderdale, on the other hand, assured the king that the national prejudice against it was still very strong, and that he would do well to be cautious, if he would retain the affections of his Scottish subjects. He recommended delay. The Earl of Crawford recommended that the attempt to introduce Episcopacy should be abandoned for ever. The Earl of Clarendon and the Duke of Ormonde, unfortunately, took the side of Sharp, and argued that it would be difficult to maintain Episcopacy in Ireland if Presbytery were continued in Scotland.* Their arguments fell in with the king's humour, who had forgotten his subscription to the Covenant, and the many solemn promises he had given to maintain Presbytery, but who still had some unpleasant reminiscences of his sojourn among the Presbyterians. It was resolved that the thing should be done immediately. The throne was strong; the loyalty of the nation was strong; and turbulent spirits would be kept in awe by the recent executions of Guthrie and Argyle, and the ominous fact that no act of indemnity had yet been passed.

On the 5th of September the Lord Chancellor presented to the Scottish Privy Council a letter from his Majesty, referring to ecclesiastical affairs. It began—"Whereas, in the month of August 1660, we did, by our letter to the Presbytery of Edinburgh, declare our purpose to maintain the government of the Church of Scotland settled by law; and our parliament having since that time not only rescinded all the acts since the troubles began referring to that government, but also declared all those pretended parliaments null and void, and left to us the settling and securing of Church government; therefore . . . we have, after mature deliberation, declared to those of your Council here our firm resolution to interpose our royal authority for restoring of that Church to its right government by bishops, as it was by law before the late troubles, during the reigns of our royal

* Burnet's History, vol. i. pp. 142, 143. M'Kenzie gives a similar account of this matter. (See his History.)

father and grandfather of blessed memory, and as it now stands settled by law."* A more unblushing composition never proceeded from a royal pen. The king, if now resolved to force Episcopacy upon the nation, should have been discreetly silent in regard to his letter to the Presbytery of Edinburgh. In that letter he either promised to establish Presbytery or he did not. If he did, why should he now, by a low juggle, attempt to put a different meaning upon it?† If he did not, why should he have used language so capable of misconstruction? Why should he have promised a General Assembly? Why should he have promised to send for Douglas? Did he doubt the construction which the Presbytery of Edinburgh had put upon it, when they enclosed it in a silver shrine, and with grateful hearts wrote him a letter of thanks; and could he now contemplate with satisfaction the cheat he had put upon them? But the truth is, the letter could only bear one meaning, and yet the king was not ashamed now to declare that he intended the very opposite of what he had then so plainly written! The whole transaction gives a full revelation of the unprincipled character of the man.

The Privy Council framed an act echoing the royal letter; this was proclaimed at the market-cross, amidst the flourish

* Wodrow's History, vol. i. p. 230.

† The following extract of a letter from the Earl of Lauderdale to Robert Douglas, dated 23d October 1660, seems to make it quite certain that the king did not at first intend to meddle with Presbytery:—"As to the concerns of our Mother Kirk," says Lauderdale, "I can only promise my faithful endeavours in what be for our good; and, indeed, it is no small comfort to me, in serving my master, to find that his Majesty is so fixt in his resolution not to alter anything in the government of that Church; of this you may be confident, though I dare not answer but that some would be willing enough to have it otherwise. I dare not doubt of the honest ministers continuing in giving constant testimonies of their duty to the king (and your letter confirms me in giving these hopes); and they doing their duty I dare answer for the king, having of late had full contentment in discoursing with his Majesty on that subject. His Majesty hath told me that he intends to call a General Assembly, and I have drawn a proclamation for that purpose, but the day is not yet resolved on. The proclamation shall, I think, come down with my Lord Treasurer, who says he will take journey this week." (This letter will be found in the Memoir of Baillie attached to the Bannatyne Edition of his Letters and Journals.)

of trumpets,* and the deed was done which for the next twenty-seven years was to let loose upon unhappy Scotland all the horrors of persecution. Had the king been wise, he would have given to Scotland the church polity which its people loved; and he would have seen then, what has since been abundantly proved, that Presbytery is perfectly compatible with monarchy. The fever of the first Covenanting period had abated, the delirium was gone, and Douglas and his brethren were exhibiting a moderation of sentiment which would have avoided the excesses of which Presbytery had sometimes been guilty, and ensured peace to the people and stability to the throne. There would have been a Church embracing the nation, in which the doctrine of passive obedience might not have been preached, but in which a warm loyalty would certainly be cherished. But instead of attaching to himself the ardour of Presbytery, Charles stung it into antagonism, and set up a form of polity which the people from their cradle had been taught to believe was no better than Popery.

The old race of bishops had died out. Only Sydserf remained. It was needful, therefore, that new bishops should be found. Up to this period Sharp had kept his secret, though there is reason to suspect that even when he was acting in London as the agent of the Resolutioners he had pledged himself to Prelacy. He now threw off his disguise. He called upon Douglas, and told him that the king was anxious he should accept the Archbishopric of St Andrews. Douglas replied that he would have nothing to do with it. After some farther conversation, Sharp rose to leave, and Douglas accompanied him to the door. "James," said the incorruptible to the corrupted, at parting, "I see you will engage, I perceive you are clear, you will be Bishop of St Andrews; take it, and the curse of God with it!" So saying, he shut the door upon him.†

Something more was necessary than to find the men. The apostolical succession had been lost, and it must be

* Wodrow's History, vol. i. p. 231.

† Kirkton's History, p. 135. See also Douglas's Letter in Wodrow, vol. i. p. 228.

restored: the ministerial character had ceased to exist in Scotland, and it must be sought for elsewhere. Once before had England bestowed upon her sister country this great boon, and she must do it again. In the month of December Sharp, Fairfowl, Hamilton, and Leighton met in London, to receive episcopal consecration. They were all Presbyterian ministers. We are already, in some measure, acquainted with Sharp. He was a man of some learning; but his chief characteristic was the caution with which he formed his opinions, and the industry with which he followed them out. Fairfowl is described as a facetious man, ready to turn everything into a joke. He was reproached with having signed the Covenant against his conscience. "There are some very good medicines," said he, "that must be swallowed at once without being chewed."* Hamilton is said to have been a good-natured man, but neither very brilliant nor very learned. His chief recommendation seems to have been that he was brother to Lord Belhaven. It is affirmed that he always had a secret attachment to Episcopacy, but was obliged to counterfeit a zeal for the Covenant.

Leighton deserves to be more particularly mentioned. He was the son of that Dr Leighton who, in Archbishop Laud's time, had written "Zion's Plea against Prelacy." For the authorship of this book he was sentenced to be committed to the Fleet during life; to pay a fine of L.10,000; to be carried to the pillory at Westminster, and there whipped; and after whipping to be set in the pillory, have one of his ears cut off, one side of his nose slit, and be branded on the one cheek with the letters S. S. = (sower of sedition); and a week afterwards to be taken to Cheapside pillory, and have the brutal punishment repeated, by having his other cheek branded, the other side of his nose slit, and his remaining ear cut off. All this torture he endured, and was liberated from prison only when the Long Parliament came into power. This, one should have thought, was enough to have given the Leightons a hatred of Episcopacy to the tenth generation. Robert Leighton was therefore reared as a Presbyterian, and became minister of Newbattle,

* Burnet's History, vol. i. p. 146.

and afterwards professor of divinity in Edinburgh. Almost every cotemporary describes him as one of the most perfect of men; and notwithstanding the unhappy circumstances with which he was mixed up, we still fondly regard him as the Fenelon of the Scottish Church. He was a fine scholar, a most persuasive preacher, and one of the kindest and gentlest of men. Living in an age of fierce polemical strife, he raised himself above its dust and its din, and dwelt in a purer and higher world of his own. His works still remain to benefit the world; and we cannot read a page without discerning much of the beauty of holiness. But why should such a man have given the lustre of his great name to so unholy a cause? The truth is, he had fixed his thoughts so intently on the essential doctrines of Christianity that he had come to regard all forms of church government as indifferent. He had no sympathy either with the bishop pleading for the Divine right of Episcopacy, or the presbyter maintaining the Divine right of Presbyterianism. The narrow bigotry and fierce intolerance of the Covenanters had estranged him from them—he had not so learned Christ. He was in this state of mind when it was determined to set up Episcopacy in Scotland; and his brother, who, strange enough! was a Papist, obtained his nomination to a bishopric; and he accepted it in the vain hope that he would do good. We must pronounce that in this he did wrong; for he lent his piety and worth to one of the blackest attempts to violate the religious convictions of a nation which history records; but even Leighton was not infallible.

Fairfowl and Hamilton had been ordained under the old Episcopate, and therefore their orders were regarded as good by English churchmen. But Sharp and Leighton had received their ordination since 1638, and in the unapostolic mode, by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery; and therefore the Bishop of London insisted that they must be made deacons and priests before they could be consecrated as bishops. Sharp remonstrated warmly against this, and pled the case of Archbishop Spottiswood, and those who had been consecrated with him. Leighton took matters easier. He thought that every Church might make such rules as it pleased in

regard to ordination, and that his re-ordination was nothing more than the ceremony by which he was admitted a minister of the Episcopal Church. As the English bishops were positive, Sharp had to yield; and he and Leighton were privately ordained, first deacons and then priests. This done, all the five were publicly consecrated in Westminster Abbey.*

A.D. 1662. After the consecration there was an episcopal feast, and the serious-minded Leighton was somewhat shocked at the jollity which prevailed. He tried to engage Sharp in earnest conversation, and to learn his ideas as to the possibility of uniting the Presbyterians with them, by some such modified Episcopacy as Archbishop Usher had proposed; but he soon found that Sharp had no ideas upon the subject at all. He next tried Fairfowl, but Fairfowl met him only with a joke or a humorous story. "By these means," says Burnet, "Leighton quickly lost all heart and hope."†

Sharp had purchased a splendid coach, and hired a couple of lackeys to run at its side, clothed in purple, that he might travel in a state befitting the primate of Scotland.‡ He invited his brethren to join him in his chariot, and they began their journey to Scotland together. It was then a long journey, generally occupying more than a week; and before it was done Leighton had got heartily tired of his companions, and besides, perceived that they were equally wearied of him. He, moreover, had learned that a triumphal entry into Edinburgh was designed, from which his retiring nature sensitively shrunk, and therefore he parted company with his episcopal coadjutors at Morpeth, and pursued the remainder of his journey alone. Sharp, Fairfowl, and Hamilton, were received at Edinburgh by the magistrates and nobility, conducted in procession through the city, and sumptuously feasted by the Commissioner and Chancellor.§

While the bishops were yet in England, the Scottish Privy Council, in compliance with a letter from the king,

* Burnet, vol. i. Wodrow, vol. i. † Burnet, vol. i. p. 154.
‡ Baillie's Letters, &c., vol. iii. p. 485.
§ Baillie's Letters, &c., vol. iii. p. 485. Burnet, vol. i.

published an order forbidding synods, presbyteries, or kirk-sessions to meet till they should be authorized by the archbishops and bishops of the Church.* Thus, once again was the Presbyterian polity put down in our country. Charles, in this step, had gone farther than either his father or grandfather. James had attempted to engraft Episcopacy upon Presbytery; Charles attempted to eradicate Presbytery altogether. James had introduced bishops only as the permanent moderators of the presbyteries; Charles now interdicted presbyteries from meeting at all, till they should be reorganized as bishops' courts. Presbytery, however, showed itself possessed of a vitality which could not be altogether destroyed.

The four bishops who had received in England the apostolic gift now set themselves to communicate it to others. With much parade, and according to the forms of the English Church, men were consecrated to the remaining sees. Edinburgh was kept vacant for some time, in the hope that Douglas would accept of it; but he remained immovable, and it was ultimately bestowed upon Wishart, the biographer of Montrose, an able and kind-hearted man.

On the 8th of May 1662 the second session of Charles's first parliament began. Its first act was for "the restitution and re-establishment of the ancient government of the Church by archbishops and bishops." By this act all the laws in favour of the Presbyterian polity, especially the Charter Act of 1592, were rescinded; the bishops were reinstated in all the rights and privileges which they possessed previous to 1638, and authorized to take upon themselves the whole government of the Church, "with advice and assistance of such of the clergy as they should find to be of known loyalty and prudence," being responsible for their administration only to the king. This act being passed, it was thought meet that the bishops should be invited to take their seats as one of the Estates of the realm. Accordingly a deputation, consisting of two noblemen, two barons, and two burgesses, waited upon them at the lodgings of the primate in the Netherbow, where they were assembled,

* Wodrow, vol. i. p. 249.

and escorted them, with all worship, to their places in the Parliament House.*

Legislation went on with increased briskness now that the episcopal bench was filled. An act was passed "for preservation of his Majesty's person, authority, and government," under which pretence the Covenants were declared to be treasonable; all leagues among subjects, upon any pretence, were pronounced to be unlawful, and the slightest whisper against the present order of things was made a punishable offence. In the same spirit a declaration was framed, which all who were in any public trust were required to sign, in which they abjured the Covenants, and declared it to be their opinion that they were unlawful and seditious.† Thus every man in a public office was compelled to perjure himself, and renounce, at the bidding of his king, what he had solemnly sworn in the presence of his God. Had Charles been wise, the Covenants would have passed away with the circumstances that called them forth, without the aid of such despotic laws.

But the act which was followed by the most important results was one entitled, "An act concerning such benefices and stipends as have been possessed without presentations from the lawful patrons." In explanation of this, it must be told that the parliament of 1649 had passed an act abolishing patronage; and the Assembly, following it up, had vested the right of election in the kirk-session, with power to the congregation to complain to the presbytery in case they were dissatisfied. All the ministers ordained from 1649 to 1660 had been chosen under this system. It was now declared that all such ministers had no right to their livings. It was, however, with a show of tenderness, provided, that every minister who should now receive a presentation from his patron, and institution from his bishop, would continue to enjoy his church, benefice, and manse, as if his title had been good from the first; and all patrons were at the same time enjoined to give presentations to those incumbents who should make application within a specified time.‡ It was quite understood that this act was passed, not so much to

* Wodrow's History, vol. i. p. 255.

† See Murray's Acts of Parliament. ‡ Ibid.

preserve the rights of the patrons as to confirm the power of the bishops. Every minister who would retain his benefice must seek institution from his bishop, and thus acknowledge in the fullest extent his authority.

Some other acts being passed, and the parliament dissolved, the Lord High Commissioner made a visit to the west. Many of the gentry exhibited their loyalty by feasting the representative of Majesty, and the country was scandalised by stories of the drunken orgies in which he nightly engaged. It was even told, and believed, that the Commissioner, with his debauched crew, had at deep midnight drank the devil's health at the Cross of Ayr; and the simple peasantry shuddered when they thought of it.* Amid these excesses the Commissioner found time to listen to a complaint of the Archbishop of Glasgow, that none of the ministers of his diocese had yet presented themselves for institution, but that they continued in their livings in defiance of the law. In these circumstances a meeting of the Privy Council was called at Glasgow on the 1st of October, and an act was passed, declaring all who had not complied with the law to have forfeited their livings, interdicting them from preaching, and charging them to remove with their families from their parishes before the first of November. It was said that almost every member of the Council was heated by wine when this resolution was framed, and perhaps this is the best excuse that can be given for so mad a deed.†

Most of the men who passed this act had more than once changed their political and religious creed to keep pace with the change of times; for consistency is a rare virtue in seasons of anarchy; and imagining that all others must be as destitute of principle as themselves, they confidently foretold that there were not ten ministers who would not yield, rather than cast themselves, their wives and their children, beggars upon the world. Others, however, anticipated a different result; for but a month before, two thousand ministers in England had relinquished their livings rather than conform to rites which they regarded as sinful. The

* Kirkton's History, pp. 149, 152. See also Burnet, vol. i.

† Burnet's History, vol. i. p. 169. Kirkton, p. 149.

day fixed by the Council came, and nearly three hundred ministers sorrowfully turned their backs upon the pleasant manses where they had spent so many happy days. In the north country some had succumbed; but in the west and south, hardly one. In the most populous and intelligent districts of the country the churches were shut, the preaching of the gospel was suspended; it was as if a Papal interdict had once more been laid on the land. The bishops and nobles were aghast at the havoc themselves had wrought. The primate disowned the deed; and the Commissioner could only curse the foolish obstinacy of the men who ruined themselves for Presbytery.

The ministers who were thus thrown out of the Church were the youngest of the brethren—not the old veterans who had held meetings of presbytery within the lines of the army which had encamped at Dunse-law and fought at Marston. Though their opinions had been somewhat extravagant, these had been toned down by time, and they were almost to a man diligent in the discharge of their pastoral duties, and consequently endeared to their flocks. The peasantry, though still but poorly educated, had by means of their preaching and catechising attained to a wonderful knowledge of their Bibles, and took a lively interest in the welfare of their spiritual guides. The minister had joined them to their wives in wedlock, and had somewhat relaxed his usual gravity on such joyful occasions; he had sprinkled their children with the waters of baptism, and given them his blessing; he had stood by their bedsides when they were sick or dying, and had pointed their hopes upward to heaven; he was associated with all their seasons both of grief and of gladness; and no marvel, then, their murmurs were loud and deep when the sacred bonds which bound them together were to be broken. And how were so many vacant pulpits to be filled? Burnet says there was an invitation sent over the country, like a hue-and-cry, to all persons to accept of benefices in the west. Lads of eighteen* were asked to take charge of parishes. Many of them were snug livings,

* Burnet says such an offer was pressed upon himself at that age. See his History, vol. i.

and it was soon seen that there were persons ready to draw the stipends, if not qualified to discharge the duties. The north had ever been the great preserve of Episcopacy, and thence came a crowd of candidates, as droves of black cattle are now brought from their wilds to be fattened on the richer pastures of the south. The parishes were filled, but many of them by men infamous for their immoral lives, almost all of them by men despicable for their talents and learning.* In some cases the people opposed the settlement of these intruders; but in general they received them in sullen silence.

The parliament of 1662 had passed an Act of Indemnity; but they had clogged it with an act empowering the parliament to impose fines upon obnoxious individuals, and with another empowering the parliament by ballot to exclude any twelve obnoxious individuals from all places of trust. This latter act was levelled chiefly against the Earl of Lauderdale, who, residing in London, and possessing the king's ear, was regarded by Middleton as his most formidable rival. But Middleton was no match for Lauderdale in intrigue: his weapons were turned against himself; and although he went to court to try to regain the influence he felt he was fast losing, he was superseded by the Earl of Rothes. This Rothes was the son of that earl who had been honoured as the father of the Covenant; but the times were changed, and so were the men. Lauderdale knew that he was completely under his influence, and accompanied him to Scotland in the summer of 1663.

A.D. 1663. Some of the outed ministers who had left their manses had not left their parishes, and continued to preach, though no longer in the church. Their parishoners flocked to hear them, and the curates, as the new incumbents were generally called, found themselves deserted. It is not to be wondered at if these men sometimes alluded to the wrongs they had suffered, and warned their people to beware of the false teachers who had come amongst them like wolves in sheep's clothing.

* Burnet's testimony upon this point is very strong; vol. i. Kirkton speaks in the same strain.

The practice of holding conventicles, as these meetings were called, had become so common, the crowds who resorted to them were so great, the attendance upon the parish churches was so miserably thin, that when the parliament met in the month of June it instantly set itself to cure the evil. The extruded ministers were forbidden to exercise their ministry under the pain of being punished as seditious persons. All and sundry were commanded to attend divine worship in their parish churches. If they absented themselves they were to be ruinously fined—every proprietor in one-fourth of his year's rental; every tenant in a proportion of his moveables, not exceeding a fourth; every burgess in a like sum, besides being deprived of his privilege of trading. The Privy Council was directed to see this act put into execution against all such persons as should be reported to them by the curates.* It was a most oppressive piece of legislation, made more oppressive still in the course of time; but the humour of the people could not be suppressed, and they called it in derision "The bishops' drag-net."

The parliament which passed this act signalized itself still further by the execution of Johnstone of Warriston. Ever since his forfeiture he had been skulking about the Low Countries and Germany, till toward the end of 1662, when he imprudently ventured into France. He was there apprehended and brought over to England. After being confined for some months in the Tower of London, he was sent down to Scotland by sea, and landed at Leith while the parliament was sitting. He was placed at the bar of the house to hear the doom of death pronounced upon him, in consequence of the sentence passed against him nearly three years before. He was now a feeble old man, with a mind so shattered by age and misfortune that when he attempted to speak he was scarcely coherent. It was the sad wreck of a once noble intellect. His venerable years and melancholy condition did not save him. He was hanged at the cross of Edinburgh, on the 22d of July, and his head, severed from his body, placed beside that of James Guthrie on the Netherbow port.† Let

* See Murray's Collection of Acts of Parliament.

† Wodrow's History, vol. i. p. 357.

the executioner say, So perish all traitors! but we cannot thus rejoice at his death. Warriston was certainly deeply involved in all the movements of the Covenanters, and had accepted office under the Protectorate; but now he was an old man, never likely to hurt any one more, and surely Charles and his parliament could have afforded to be merciful. Lauderdale might have remembered that Warriston had sat as his brother elder in the Westminster Assembly—that then they both held the same sentiments and pursued the same ends—and made an effort to save him. But Lauderdale had already discovered his true character. He had been a Covenanter, because it was necessary to be so to rise to power and place; and now he was a persecutor of the Covenanters for the same reason. He could calmly sacrifice his ancient friend to advance himself.

The Privy Council were not long of entering upon the work which had been given them to do. It was in the west and south-west of Scotland that the aversion to Episcopacy was strongest; and thither Sir James Turner was despatched with a party of troopers, to compel all to attend upon religious services which in their hearts they abhorred. Turner was a military adventurer, ready to sell his sword to the highest bidder. He had served in the continental wars; he had served under the banners of the Covenant; and now he was ready to serve the king. "I had," he himself candidly confesses, "swallowed without chewing, in Germany, a very dangerous maxim, which military men there too much follow; which was, that so we serve our master honestly, it is no matter what master we serve."* The life he had led had completely deadened any feelings of compassion which may have originally belonged to him, and his passions, always violent, were very frequently inflamed to madness by drink. Yet from his youth upwards he had cherished a fondness for letters, of which he has left us no despicable proof in the "Memoirs of his own Life and Times." This was the man upon whom the Privy Council fixed as the executioner of their acts, and it was soon seen that he was peculiarly well fitted for his work.

* Turner's Memoirs of his own Life and Times.

It was natural for the curates to feel some degree of chagrin at the desertion of their churches; but they become odious when they place themselves in the position of informers, as too many of them did. Some were in the habit of calling a roll of their parishioners after the church service was over, and handing a list of the absentees to the officer commanding in the district. In the case of wealthy proprietors, their names were forwarded to the Privy Council, who knew well how to proceed; in the case of the poorer tenantry, the officer, without any form of law, imposed a fine, and, if it were not instantly paid, he quartered some of his soldiers upon the family till the money was got. A set of rough dragoons, thus domiciled with religious families, were not likely to respect their feelings or increase their quietude, while they were devouring their substance. This was one way in which the law was enforced. But there were methods meaner still. Some of the prelates kept informers in their pay—low wretches, who went to the conventicles in disguise, and afterwards informed upon those who were present. In other cases, a party of soldiers visited those churches still occupied by Presbyterian ministers, to which people from the surrounding parishes were accustomed to resort; and stationing themselves at the door, as the congregation was being dismissed, questioned every one whether or not he belonged to the parish; and if he did not, he was laid hold of as a defaulter, and fined.* This was the beginning of the systematic attempt to torture the country into a compliance with Episcopacy. The people groaned under it, but had patience to endure. Resistance was utterly hopeless.

A.D. 1664. In the beginning of 1664, Archbishop Sharp made a visit to London. It was said that he had not found the Privy Council so subservient as he could have wished; that the Chancellor Glencairn had shown some uneasiness both at the sufferings of the people and the arrogance of the prelates; and that he went to complain. Be this as it may, on the 16th of January the king, at Whitehall, erected a Court of High Commission, whose special

* Kirkton's History, p. 200. See also Burnet, vol. i. Sharp kept a wretch called Carstairs who acted as an informer.

business it was to attend to ecclesiastical affairs. This tyrannical court had its only foundation in the royal prerogative; but it was invested with most plenary powers. None were exempted from its jurisdiction. The slightest whisper against the Established Church might constitute a crime, according to its code of law. It could depose ministers; fine, imprison, whip all; and it did not allow its powers to sleep.* The arbitrary and inquisitorial proceedings of such a court had once before helped to rouse the indignation of the country; and when again the country beheld faithful ministers banished, pious gentlemen ruined by exorbitant fines, young men and even women cruelly scourged, wrath began to accumulate. Charles himself, blind though he usually was to such things, at length began to see that its proceedings were breeding antipathy and disgust, and, in little more than a year after its institution, ordered it to be discontinued.

A.D. 1665. But though the High Commission no longer met, persecution did not cease. In the month of December 1665 the Privy Council issued a proclamation against conventicles; and Turner continued his system of oppression in Galloway and the other districts of the west, where the peasantry still remember his name with hereditary abhorrence. But neither the proclamations of the Council nor the outrages of a soldiery hardened to crime could terrify the people from occasionally meeting to hear what they considered the pure gospel, preached to them by a pastor whom they loved. Sometimes they met in a gentleman's dining-room—sometimes in a barn—anywhere to escape detection. The people stealthily brought their children that they might be baptised: young men and young women sometimes presented themselves in order to be married. But it was hardly to be expected that men thus goaded to madness would not some day, when opportunity presented, turn upon their oppressors. The most timid of creatures, when driven to bay, will show fight rather than tamely die. Such circumstances as these now occurred.

* A copy of the royal letter setting up this court is to be found in Wodrow, vol. i. pp. 384–86.

On the 12th of November a cry got up in the little village of Dalry, in Galloway, that some soldiers were binding an old man in his own house, and threatening to strip him naked and roast him on a gridiron, if he did not pay his church fines. It so happened that four men, who for some time had been in hiding among the hills, had come down to the village in search of food, and they instantly went to the rescue. Some words were exchanged, the soldiers drew their swords, the rustics discharged a pistol, loaded with tobacco stopple, which took effect, and the victory was theirs. The soldiers surrendered themselves as their prisoners. The noise of this soon spread over the country, and all felt that they had gone too far to recede. They knew that Turner would take terrible revenge if he had it in his power. They resolved to march to Dumfries, where he was lying, and take him by surprise. Fifty horse and two hundred foot were soon gathered for such an enterprise. It was late in the morning when they reached Dumfries; but not a sentinel had been set, and Sir James had not yet got out of his bed. The prancing of horsemen in the street made him start to his feet, and hurry to the window in his night-clothes to learn the cause of the noise. Finding himself in the hands of his enemies, he begged for mercy, and it was given him; though one should have imagined that men almost maddened by his oppressions would have shot or hanged him on the spot.

Having succeeded thus far, the insurgents were at a loss as to what they should next do, so unpreconcerted had been the rising. After some hesitation they marched into Ayrshire, where the Presbyterian feeling was peculiarly strong, and where it was hoped that numerous recruits would enlist in the good cause. But many of the leading west-country gentlemen were already in prison; the terror of the king's name was strong; the enterprise seemed utterly hopeless; and comparatively few joined their ranks. They next marched to Lanark, another stronghold of the Covenant. Here they reached their greatest numerical strength, counting upwards of two thousand. But they were little better than a rabble. Almost the only military man amongst

them was a Colonel Wallace, upon whom they conferred the chief command; and he seems to have done all that man could do to organize and discipline them; but a few days' drill could not fit them to cope with regular troops thoroughly disciplined and completely armed. It was seriously debated whether they should not disperse, but it was decided that it was safer to remain in arms. Accordingly the troops were drawn up in the High Street of the town of Lanark, and the Covenant was solemnly renewed; but the spirits of most were depressed, and foreboded disaster.

Meantime the Privy Council were greatly alarmed, and ordered General Dalziel to march against the insurgents. No fitter man could have been found. His royalism amounted to frenzy. His disposition was naturally savage, and he had learned his profession in Muscovy, in the wars against the Tartars and Turks, where pity was unknown. He was universally reputed, during his lifetime, to be in league with the devil; and even to this day his old mansion-house of Binns, where his portrait leers from the walls, is believed to be haunted by his grim ghost.

With such an enemy watching their movements, the Covenanters should have remained at Lanark. They were there in a friendly country; the town standing on an eminence offered many advantages for defence; and the Clyde, swollen by the winter's rains and rushing through its deep rocky ravines, lay betwixt them and Dalziel. But they were deceived by a rumour that Edinburgh and the Lothians were ready to join them. They resolved to march upon Bathgate that very night. The night was dark, the rain fell in torrents, the country to be traversed was a dreary moor; and many disliking such hardships, and despairing of the issue, slipped away. From Bathgate they proceeded to Colinton, where it was made plain that the capital had assumed an attitude of defence, and that no help was to be found. The Pentland hills now reared their green slopes to the south and west of them, and thither they directed their weary steps. Reaching a place called Rullion Green, they halted to rest. It was now the 28th of November. For some time General Dalziel had been following like a blood-

hound on their tract, and the dispirited Covenanters had scarcely halted when intelligence was brought that he was approaching from Currie, and would soon be upon them. They had already attempted in vain to negociate, and now there was nothing for it but to fight. They were still 900 strong, and made their dispositions for battle. In the first onset the Covenanters were like to have carried the day, but the face of affairs was speedily reversed, and the whole multitude were chased in confusion from the field. About forty-five were killed and a hundred taken prisoners—numbers which show that the fighting was not severe. But, in fact, it was little more than the dispersion of a mob.*

The prisoners were carried to Edinburgh, and some of them were put into Haddo's Hole, and others into the Tolbooth. And now came the day of terrible retribution. It was thought that the rising was the result of some extensive conspiracy. It was even suspected that the poor peasantry of Galloway were in league with the Dutch, at that time at war with England. It was therefore resolved to try what torture could do in eliciting the truth, though torture had been unknown in Scotland for upwards of thirty years. Among the prisoners were John Neilson of Corsack, and Hugh M'Kail, a preacher of the gospel. Their limbs were encased in that dreadful instrument of agony—the boot. Lord Rothes sat by, and ordered the executioner to give another and still another stroke, till their legs were crushed almost to a jelly. The sufferings of Corsack were so dreadful, that he screamed aloud in his agony. But still they revealed nothing, for in truth they had nothing to reveal. It is certain that about this period a plot had been formed to seize upon the principal fortresses, and a communication had been made to the States-General, requesting assistance in arms and money; but who made that communication is a mystery to this day. We may be quite sure it had nothing to do with the rising in Galloway.

When the unhappy men were tried for their lives, it was pled that they had received quarter when they surrendered

* I have taken my account of this rising from Blackadder's Memoirs, and from the Histories of Wodrow and Kirkton.

themselves prisoners; but it was ruled by the Court, that such mercy extended by a soldier must not influence the justice of a judge, and the work of death began.* First ten of them were led out and hanged; then seven more; and to strike terror into the rebellious west, other sixteen were hung in Glasgow, Ayr, Irvine, and Dumfries.† The populations of the towns in which these things were done were deeply affected. Grief and anger mingled with fear. It was thought that the Laird of Corsack might have been spared, seeing he had interfered to save the life of Turner, notwithstanding all he had suffered at his hands. But it was the martyr-like deportment and touching eloquence of M'Kail that made the deepest impression on the public mind. It was afterwards discovered that, before the execution of M'Kail and those who suffered with him, the Archbishop of Glasgow had returned from London with a letter from the king, approving of what had been done, and giving his opinion that enough of blood had already been shed; but he did not produce it in time to stop their execution, and so their blood is upon his head.‡

Sir Thomas Dalziel was now sent into the west, to crush any remaining spirit of turbulence, and bring the country to a fondness for Episcopacy. His ferocious temper and Muscovite habits had now free scope, and many traditions yet linger in Ayrshire and Dumfries regarding the relentless rigour with which he ruined the miserable Presbyterians who fell into his hands. The old spirit was completely broken, or at least bent to the very ground. The churches began to fill, the curates to be treated with a show of respect, and it appeared as if persecution was about to triumph.§ While Scotland was thus suffering, its ancestral king was dallying with his mistresses at Whitehall, and perhaps sportively telling them that Presbyterianism was not a religion for a gentleman.

A.D. 1667. The happiness of a whole country frequently depends upon the cabals of a court. The Scotch

* Wodrow's History, vol. i.

† Historians vary as to the exact number who were executed. There were, however, between thirty and forty.

‡ Burnet's History, vol. i. p. 264. § Ibid. vol. i. p. 265.

nobility had hitherto played a base part. They had made themselves the tools of an odious tyranny, and passed every law, however cruel, which was brought before them. But some of them began to pity their prostrate country. The Earls of Tweeddale and Kincardine, and Sir Robert Murray, counselled that milder measures should be tried. The Earl of Rothes and Archbishop Sharp, who had always been the advocates of violence, gradually lost their ground; and the Earl of Lauderdale, who had never liked the primate, stood by and quietly rejoiced in their fall. Rothes had proposed that the Declaration renouncing the Covenant should be offered not only to those in office, but to all, and that those who refused it should be treated as traitors. Tweeddale and his friends urged that, instead of the Declaration, suspected persons should be required merely to subscribe bonds pledging themselves to keep the peace. These counsels prevailed; an order was issued to disband the army; and toward the end of 1667 a proclamation was made, inviting all who had been engaged in the recent insurrection to appear before the Council, and subscribe the bonds of peace. Pardon was promised to all who should do so, with the exception of a few who were peculiarly obnoxious.* The majority of those who had laid themselves open to the rigours of the law availed themselves of this act of indemnity; but some of the sterner Presbyterians argued, that to bind themselves to keep the peace was to bind themselves to support the established government in Church and State, and chose rather still to suffer affliction than make any compromise.

A.D. 1668.

Thus the year 1667 passed away, and the spring of 1668. On the 11th of July 1668 Archbishop Sharp was coming from his lodging in the Blackfriars' Wynd of Edinburgh. He had just stepped into his carriage, and Honeyman, the Bishop of Orkney, was following, when a pistol was fired at him. Honeyman's arm happened at the moment to intervene, and was shattered by the ball; but it probably saved the primate's life. The deed being done, the assassin mysteriously disappeared amid the confusion which ensued. It turned out afterwards that he

* Burnet's History, vol. i. pp. 273–6. Wodrow, vol. i.

had slipped down a close, got to his lodgings, changed part of his clothes, and appeared again in the streets, where no one suspected him.* In the snapping of that pistol the primate should have heard an echo of the hatred with which he was regarded. Assassination is a desperate remedy, but in every down-trodden country there will be desperate men who will resort to it. So all history has proved.

A.D. 1669. So early as 1667 a proposal to extend an indulgence to some of the ejected Presbyterian ministers had been talked of at court, but it was 1669 before it was matured. On the 7th of June of that year the Earl of Tweeddale laid before the Privy Council a letter from the king, authorizing such an indulgence, and explaining its terms. The Council were to appoint such of the ejected ministers as they thought right to vacant parishes. Those ministers who agreed to take collation from the bishops were to have a right to the stipends; those who did not were to enjoy merely the manse and glebe, and the right to exercise their ministerial office; all were to bind themselves to hold kirk-sessions and attend presbyteries, and not to administer the sacraments of baptism or the Lord's Supper to any but their own parishioners; and further, to discourage the resort of people from other parishes to their preaching. Proceeding upon this royal letter, the Council first admitted twelve ministers to vacant parishes, and, within a short period afterwards, thirty more. Some of these were admitted to the parishes where they had previously ministered, and others to different ones; and all of them, while adhering to their Presbyterian principles, expressed their gratitude for this act of royal clemency.†

It was scarcely to be expected that so scanty a measure of grace would bring peace to the Church. The truth is, it displeased both parties. The uncompromising Covenanters declared it was an attempt to skin over the ulcer without healing it. The ministers who were not included in the indulgence spoke bitter things against their brethren who were. It was found, moreover, that men protected by go-

* Burnet's History, vol. i. p. 309. Kirkton, p. 279.

† Burnet's History, vol. i. pp. 314–316. Wodrow, vol. ii. pp. 130–32.

vernment are more loyal than men who are treated as outlaws. The indulged ministers no longer inveighed against the king and his bishops, as they had done at their conventicles, and for this they were branded as the king's curates, and as dumb dogs; and the popularity which had once attended them now forsook them. The high Prelatic party were equally wroth. They declared that the measure was Erastian, and more, that it was unlawful. Zealous for the royal prerogative hitherto, they now declared that the king had no business to override acts of parliament. It was in the large diocese of Glasgow that Presbyterianism was peculiarly strong, and Archbishop Burnet and his clergy were peculiarly indignant at the indulgence. A synod was held at Glasgow in October, and a remonstrance framed in language not quite so fawning as was generally used by the bishops to the king. It was retained, however, for reconsideration, but a copy of it, in some indirect manner, was procured and forwarded to court. The king declared it was no better than the western Remonstrance; and Burnet soon afterwards paid for his presumption by the loss of his bishopric.

The synod was hardly dissolved when the parliament met. The Earl of Lauderdale acted as his Majesty's Commissioner. On the 10th of November the famous Assertory Act was passed. "The Estates of Parliament," it proceeds, "having seriously considered how necessary it is for the good and peace of the Church and State that his Majesty's power and authority in relation to matters and persons ecclesiastical be more clearly asserted by an act of parliament, . . . do hereby enact, assert, and declare, that his Majesty hath the supreme authority and supremacy over all persons, and in all causes ecclesiastical within this kingdom; and that, by virtue thereof, the ordering and disposal of the external government and policy of the Church doth properly belong to his Majesty and his successors, as an inherent right of the crown; and that his Majesty and his successors may settle, enact, and emit such constitutions, acts, and orders, concerning the administration of the external government of the Church, and the persons employed in the same, and concerning all ecclesastical meetings and matters to be proposed

and determined therein, as they in their royal wisdom shall think fit."

Nobody liked this act. It was said that it made Charles both king and pope. The bishops spoke against it, but voted for it. The Presbyterians had little to say in such matters at all. Lauderdale whispered to his brother nobles that it was meant to humble the pride of the prelates, and make the mitre dependent on the Crown; he whispered to others that it was meant to give legal authority to such acts as the Indulgence. It was said afterwards that Lauderdale knew that the Duke of York was a Papist, and that it was designed to enable him to change the religion of the land by a stroke of his pen.*

A.D. 1670. The first exercise of Charles's ecclesiastical power was unfrocking the Archbishop of Glasgow. This done, Leighton the Bishop of Dunblane was persuaded to become commendator of the vacant see; and about the same time Gilbert Burnet, the historian, was nominated to the professorship of theology in the university. They were very different men—Leighton, retiring, heavenly-minded, inclined to asceticism; Burnet, bustling, officious, fond of mingling in the world; but still they were bound together by a sincere friendship, and were both anxious to heal the Church of her wounds. Leighton set himself to reform and elevate his clergy; and Burnet procured the appointment of a deputation who perambulated the west, and counselled moderation and peace. But the great object of the new archbishop, the burden of many of his prayers, the end for which he was willing to bear all the obloquy of his position, was a scheme of accommodation between the Episcopalians and Presbyterians. Invited to court, he ventured to lay it before the king, and the king rejoiced the good man's heart by giving it his sanction, and embodying it in a set of instructions to his Commissioner, the Earl of Lauderdale. His proposal was to the effect, that the bishops should be recognised in the Church only as the perpetual moderators of the presbyteries; that ministers should be ordained by the bishop with the concurrence of his presbyters, and not in the cathedral but in the churches where

* Burnet's History, vol. i. p. 317.

they were to serve; and that synods should be held every third year, in which the bishops might be censured if found guilty of any fault.*

The Earl of Kincardine was anxious that these propositions should at once be made law; but the Earl of Lauderdale argued that it would be rash to make so great a change in the constitution of the Church, unless it were to be followed by some practical result. Some of the leading Presbyterian ministers were therefore invited to meet Leighton at Holyrood Chapel, when the plan of the proposed union was explained to them; but they received it coldly, though the archbishop urged it upon them with his most persuasive eloquence. Both Leighton and Burnet afterwards made several attempts to gain them, but they held that Episcopacy in no guise was allowable, and at length the fond endeavour was abandoned in despair.†

We need not wonder that the Presbyterians resisted the proposed union, though recommended to them by the apostolic piety of Leighton. Episcopacy had never appeared in Scotland in an amiable form—at that moment it was the cause of all its misery; and it could not be forgotten that, at the beginning of that very century, bishops had crept into the Church, under the mask of perpetual moderators, who had afterwards with a high hand lorded it over God's heritage. While, therefore, we admire the catholicity of Leighton, we should be slow to call the Presbyterians either fanatics or fools. But even though they had yielded, it is very doubtful if the plan could have been carried. Among the prelates Leighton was alone. Sharp was violently opposed to the compromise, so derogatory to his primatial dignity. Lauderdale's sincerity was suspected; and it is scarcely probable that Charles, in the face of the English Church, would have touched such a law with his sceptre.

While these things were doing, conventicles were increasing. Hitherto they had generally been kept in private houses, but now they began to be held in the fields; and the Covenanters in some instances came armed, in case of being surprised by the soldiery who were everywhere scouring the

* Burnet's History, vol. i. p. 322–28. Wodrow, vol. ii. † Ibid.

country. Three of these field-meetings during this year excited a great deal of notice from the crowds which gathered at them: the first met at Beithhill, in the parish of Dunfermline; the second at Livingseat, in the parish of Carnwath; and the third at Torwood, in Stirlingshire. We have an account of the first in the Memoirs of Blackadder, one of the ministers who officiated at it. It gives an interesting glimpse of these strange congregations among the hills.

It was in the month of June that it met. On the Saturday afternoon the people began to gather, and many of them lay all night on the hill-side. Mr Blackadder came the same evening privately from Edinburgh, slept at Inverkeithing with his clothes on, and starting early next morning, without knowing exactly where the meeting was to be held, learned by the way that it had been resolved to hold it on the hill-top, that the country round and round might be seen. A proper spot being fixed upon, a tent was set up, and Mr Dixon began the services. Whiler Dixon was lecturing, Blackadder stationed himself with the men appointed to watch on the outskirts of the crowd to guard against surprise. During sermon some ill-affected people were observed to drop in, and, among others, the two sons of the curate; upon which it was resolved that they should be allowed to come, but that they should not be allowed to go, lest they should give the alarm; and men were set to watch their movements. One suspected man was observed making for his horse, but he was followed; and so he pretended he was merely in search of a drink, and returned to the meeting. The morning service began at eight o'clock, and ended at eleven.

Mr Blackadder was to preach in the afternoon. Before going to the tent, and while revolving his sermon, he heard a considerable noise, and found it was a crowd bringing back the curate's sons, who had attempted to walk off. Blackadder interfered, and told them they might go if they chose, upon which the youths agreed to remain. After the sermon was begun, a gentleman on horseback arrived, followed by a few others. It was the lieutenant of the militia stationed in the district. He dismounted, gave his horse to a man to

hold, went into the crowd, and listened quietly for a time. He then returned to his horse, and proceeded to remount; but some of the guard stepped forward, and requested him to remain, lest his departure should disturb the meeting. Finding him determined to go, and dreading his purpose, they laid hold of him as he was putting his foot in the stirrup. Thus rudely handled, he lifted his stick as if to strike, upon which two men, with cocked pistols, rushed upon him with such threatening looks as effectually cooled his courage. Such a scuffle happening in the margin of the crowd, sent a wave of excitement over the whole congregation, which in due course reached the minister. He stopped his sermon, came down from the tent, and persuaded the people to give the lieutenant his horse, and allow him to depart, as a proof of their peaceable intentions. This done, the services were resumed, and brought to a conclusion without any further interruption; but the violence done to the king's servant was afterwards made the subject of much talk, and of several prosecutions.*

These armed meetings alarmed a government which felt that its authority did not rest upon the affections of the people. It was resolved to resort to measures more severe than any which had yet been tried. The parliament met on the 28th of July, and continued its sittings during the greater part of August. It passed an act making it obligatory upon all to reveal upon oath whatever they knew in regard to conventicles and those present at them. This oath might be administered by any one having authority from his Majesty—it might be a Privy Councillor, or it might be a trooper; and it might be administered to any one—to a wife to criminate her husband, or to a child to reveal the hiding-place of a parent. Refusal was followed by imprisonment or banishment. This act was followed by another more terrible still. To preach at a field conventicle was DEATH AND CONFISCATION OF GOODS. To be present at such a meeting was a fine utterly ruinous. That this law might not remain inactive on the statute-book, not only were the sheriffs exhorted to use their utmost diligence to

* Memoirs of the Rev. John Blackadder, pp. 144–48.

bring offenders to justice, but all his Majesty's good subjects were encouraged to join in the hunt by the promise of five hundred merks for every preacher they should seize, with a promise of full indemnity for any slaughter they might commit in apprehending and securing their victim. No bloodier law was ever proclaimed. During wars of extermination among savage hordes, it is no uncommon thing to offer a reward for every head of an enemy that shall be brought into the camp; but here a king and his parliament offer a reward for every minister of the gospel who shall be caught preaching the Word of God on some lonely hillside, to a congregation of peaceable people, who prefer their old Presbyterian pastors and their old Presbyterian ways to the new Episcopal ones.

Two other acts were passed of a similar complexion. The one imposed fines, imprisonment, and exile, for having a child baptized by an outed minister, and the other for absence, without good cause, for three successive Sabbaths from the parish church. One does not know whether to execrate most the monarch, who, without any religious convictions himself, thus fiercely persecuted his people for religion's sake, or the members of the Scottish parliament, who, without a protesting voice, surrendered their tenantry and friends to the rigours of such laws.

Notwithstanding these laws, conventicles continued; for resolute men will rather surrender their lives than their religion. The government, on the other hand, persevered in that species of persecution which is most apt to wear out a people's patience. Pious men and women were constantly being dragged before the Privy Council, or some inferior tribunal, for being present at a conventicle, or for sheltering a minister, and severely fined. So time wore on. In 1672 parliament again met, and again passed acts against the Presbyterians. The ejected ministers had, in some small degree, kept up their diminishing numbers by new ordinations; this was declared to be a crime. Many parents either kept their infants unbaptized, or kept it secret that they had been sprinkled by some Presbyterian pastor: to have a child unbaptized for thirty days after its birth was also de-

clared to be an offence, for which an exorbitant fine must atone.* To make room for the victims of these cruel laws, the Bass Rock was converted into a state-prison; and many ministers and others were sent to it, to wear out their existence amid the screaming of sea-birds and the dashing of waves.

These new severities were followed by an act of grace. A second Indulgence was extended to about eighty of the ejected ministers. But it was clogged with conditions. The indulged ministers were not to stir out of the parishes appointed them without the express permission of the bishop of the diocese; they were all to administer the sacrament of the Supper on the same day; and on no account to marry or baptize any except such as belonged to their own parishes. Several rejected the Indulgence as utterly Erastian. What right had the civil power to appoint to them the bounds of their office? What right had the civil power to give them liberty to preach at all? Their office was from a higher source. Those who did accept of the Indulgence found there were troubles within as well as without the pale of the law. They must keep the 29th of May as the anniversary of the Restoration; and if they refused, they were fined. They must abjure lecturing; for the Council, in its paternal solicitude for religion, had proscribed this popular method of explaining the Scriptures to the people.†

Wodrow gives us an idea of the ruinous fines which were extorted from the Nonconformists, by furnishing us with a list of twelve gentlemen, in the shire of Renfrew alone, and in the course of a few years, who were fined in no less a sum than L.368,000. Sir George Maxwell of Newark was fined L.94,800. The Laird of Duchal, L.84,000. Cunningham of Carncurran, L.15,833. Maxwell of Dargavel, L.18,900. Sir George Maxwell of Netherpollok, L.93,600. This of course was Scotch money, but still it was a monstrous sum, and had it all been levied, the gentlemen must have been ruined. The government accepted a composition, and upon the payment of that they rigorously insisted.‡

* See Acts of the Scotch Parliament, 1672.

† Crookshank's History, vol. i. pp. 288–300. See also Wodrow, vol. ii.

‡ History, vol. ii.

It is not our purpose to mention all the individuals who suffered during this reign of terror in Scotland. The Council found out device after device for bringing the laws to bear upon the people. Magistrates were made responsible for all conventicles held within their burghs. Heritors were made responsible for all meetings held upon their grounds. Heads of households were made responsible for their children and servants. Sometimes the persecution abated, and sometimes its fury increased, according to the humour of the men in power. Lauderdale, now created a duke, and married to Lady Dysart, an ambitious and unprincipled woman, is chiefly responsible for it. He was an able but flagitious statesman, and was possessed of a strong but coarse mind. Like other renegades, he hated the party from which he had apostatized, and was resolved to extirpate it, cost what it would. There was an appearance of grossness about his figure and face, which was no false index of the state of his heart. His temper, never amiable, became more and more irascible as he advanced in years, and he could not bear contradiction. While among the Covenanters he had acquired some knowledge of his Bible, and its language was now employed to give point to his jests. There are few things in history more striking and more melancholy than to find the Church of Scotland's representative to the Westminister Assembly of Divines become her cruel persecutor, and a mocker at all sacred things.

In 1674 a circumstance occurred, half ludicrous, half pitiful. As it was unsafe for men to petition for any relaxation from oppression, a number of women, some of them of high rank, resolved to do so. Accordingly, on the 4th of June, when the Privy Councillors came up to the Parliament-house, they found the entrance filled with females. When the archbishop appeared, some of them, with a woman's liberty of speech, called him "Judas," and "traitor," which made him creep close to the chancellor, in whose company he was. A minister's widow presented the petition. Rothes received it courteously, talked and even jested with some of the ladies who had come into the council-room, and seemed to enjoy the primate's perturbation. Howbeit, the petition was voted

criminal, the subscribers were strictly interrogated if no man had been concerned in it, and some of them were afterwards imprisoned, and others banished from Edinburgh, for having thus presumed to mention their grievances.

There were now in the country a considerable number of ministers and others, who had been summoned before the Council for preaching at conventicles, or being present at them, and who had not appeared, knowing their fate if the law had them in its gripe. In 1675 an obsolete and barbarous practice was revived, and letters of intercommuning issued against about a hundred of these,—some of them extensive proprietors, some of them ladies of gentle birth and breeding, some of them ministers of the gospel. These letters were a species of civil excommunication, cutting them off from all society. Whoever should now harbour them, or converse with them, supply them with food or clothes, extend to them any of the meanest charities of life, was declared guilty of the same crimes as themselves ; and all sheriffs and their officers were ordered to pursue and apprehend them wherever they were to be found. Under the terrors of this proscription, many were obliged to leave their peaceful homes and betake themselves to the hills, and wander about from place to place, "being destitute, afflicted, tormented." No marvel that their fanaticism acquired a darker tone, and that a sullen revenge grew up within them.

While the country was in this unsettled state, incidents were occuring in Edinburgh, which perhaps, above everything else, reveal the iniquity of the times, and the unprincipled character of the men at the head of affairs. When Archbishop Sharp was fired at in 1668, he got a glimpse, and just a glimpse, of a man at his carriage-door; but the crack of the pistol, and the blaze of the powder, had so stamped that man's features upon his mind, that he could never forget them. He had since observed a man who kept a shop not far from his lodgings in Edinburgh frequently looking hard at him, and he made up his mind that he was the assassin. He got a friend to go to this man, whose name was Mitchell, and who had once been a student of divinity, and promise him security if he would make a con-

fession of his crime. Upon this Mitchell agreed to tell everything.* In February 1674, he was brought before the Privy Council, and upon his life being solemnly promised, he acknowledged that it was he who had shot at the Archbishop of St Andrews, but that no living creature was the partner of his guilt. It was now debated what should be done with him. Some proposed that one of his hands, others that both, should be cut off, and farther, that he should be imprisoned for life. It was thought proper, however, that he should be brought before the Court of Justiciary, and his sentence pronounced by it. When placed at the bar, one of the judges gave him a friendly hint to confess nothing, unless he were sure of his limbs as well as his life. Mitchell took the hint, and now denied everything.† He was told that if he retracted his confession, the Privy Council would retract its promise, but still he stood stoutly to his denial. As no other evidence could be got, the advocate was obliged to abandon the indictment, and Mitchell was sent back to prison.‡

Sometimes he was confined in the Edinburgh Tolbooth, and sometimes in the Bass Rock; and so two years passed away. In 1676 he was again brought before the Lords of Justiciary, and questioned in regard to his being present with the insurgents at Pentland. He declined to criminate himself, and torture was threatened. He pled that he had been tried two years ago, and the diet deserted for want of proof, and that it was unrighteous still to detain him in prison, and to torture him now to accuse himself. The courts of justice should ever be the last refuge of the distressed, but they have too often been made the instruments of tyranny, and it was so now. On the 24th of January 1676, the judges came into the inner Parliament-house in their robes, and the executioner, the boot, and the victim were brought in. Mitchell was tied to an armed chair, and his right leg placed in the instrument of torture. Stroke after stroke was given by the hangman to the wedge—the boot tightened, and the leg was crushed—but still the

* Burnet's History, vol. ii. p. 14. † Ibid. vol. ii. p. 15.

‡ Wodrow's History, vol. ii. pp. 249–52.

poor wretch kept his secret, till, at the ninth blow, he fainted clean away; and then the judges, who had hitherto looked on, rose and left the room. Their barbarous cruelty had failed of its purpose.*

Mitchell was remanded to prison, but still Sharp seems to have thought himself unsafe so long as he lived. The letters of intercommuning had filled the country with desperate men, and he dreaded others might be encouraged to assassinate him if Mitchell were allowed to escape. Lauderdale yielded to his clamours, and, in January 1678, Mitchell was again placed at the bar of the Justiciary Court. His previous indictment had embraced, besides the attempted murder of the primate, the Pentland Hill rising, but now the charge was limited to the first of these. No proof was produced but his confession before the Privy Council. Sir George Lockhart, one of the ablest lawyers and most upright men of the day, undertook his defence, and pled that no such extrajudicial confession could be allowed in court. This plea was overruled, on the ground that the Privy Council was a judicatory. Lockhart next pled the solemn promise of indemnity, but, to their everlasting infamy, Lauderdale, Rothes, Halton, and Sharp denied upon oath that any such promise had been given. Lockhart produced a copy of the Act of Council, in which mention of the promise was made; it was an uncertified copy, but he asked that the Registers of Council might be examined, and argued that, as the Council had been declared to be a judicatory, there was a right of search. Lauderdale was in court when this request was made, and stood up and said—that he was not brought there to be accused of perjury; that the books of Council contained the king's secrets, and that no court should have the perusal of them. Mitchell was condemned to be hanged, and hanged he was at the Grassmarket; but the act still remains in the records of the Privy Council, to prove the perjury of the four greatest persons in the realm to take away his life. After the trial, Lauderdale talked of granting him a reprieve, till the king should be consulted; but Sharp, haunted by the dread of assassination,

* Wodrow's History, vol. ii. pp. 457, 458.

resisted such clemency: "Then," said the duke, with a brutal jest, and mimicking the cant of the Covenanters, "let him go and glorify God at the Grassmarket!"*

Conventicles still continued, especially in the west and south-west country, and the gentry had shown a great reluctance to subscribe the bonds which made them responsible for all their dependents. It was resolved to treat the country as in a state of rebellion. A host of ten thousand men, of whom six thousand were Highlanders, was marched into the western counties, to seek free quarters there, and promote Episcopacy in their own fashion. We shall deceive ourselves if we think of this wild horde of men from the hills as being in anything like to that Highland Brigade which now embraces some of the finest regiments in the British army. It was a rabble of caterans accustomed to murder and theft, taught to regard plundering the Sassenach as a virtue, and having many of the habits of savage life. A committee of Council accompanied it, to point out the victims of oppression. Still the majority of the westland gentry resolutely refused to enter into the bonds, and the Duke of Lauderdale is said, in a frenzy at their obstinacy, to have bared his arm at the council-table, and sworn, by the name of the great Jehovah, that he would yet compel them to do so.†

The Duke of Hamilton, grieved to see the country laid waste, ventured to visit London to complain to the king. The Earls of Athole and Perth followed him, bent on the same errand. Charles received them coldly, and said he approved of all that his Commissioner had done; but still it was felt both by the king and his minister that such oppression could not be continued, and so the Highland host was dismissed to its native mountains.‡ Still the country continued in a most miserable condition. Hundreds were in hiding for fear of the law. Field meetings, attended by armed men, were regularly held. The Episcopal clergy were regarded by the Presbyterians as the cause of all their woes, and many were ripe for any desperate deed. Yet, to such a state of abject

* Burnet's History, vol. ii. pp. 15–18. Wodrow, vol. ii. pp. 468–71.
† Burnet's History, vol. ii. p. 20. ‡ Ibid. pp. 21, 22.

servitude had the nobles sunk, that a Convention of the Estates this very year wrote a letter to the king magnifying above measure the administration of Lauderdale.

There was a wretch named Carmichael commissioned by the Privy Council, at the request of Archbishop Sharp, to ferret out all frequenters of conventicles in Fife, and he had used his power with merciless severity. On the 3d of May 1679, a band of outlawed men resolved to lie in wait for him near St Andrews, where it was understood he was to be hunting. He did not appear, and just as they were about to disperse, a boy told them that the archbishop was at Ceres, on his way from Edinburgh to St Andrews. The stern fanatics concluded that Providence had delivered their enemy into their hands, and the desperate resolution of murdering him was formed. It was not long till they descried the archbishop's coach driving along Magus Moor, about two miles to the south-west of his episcopal city. They instantly gave chase. Sharp, perceiving himself pursued, cried to the coachman to drive with all his might; but a heavy, lumbering coach on a bad road had no chance against light horsemen. He was soon overtaken; the traces were cut; and he was at the mercy of men who regarded him as a traitor to his country and his God, and believed that to slay him was to render an acceptable service to Heaven. His daughter was beside him in the carriage, and though a pistol-shot was fired in at the window, he still clung to her side, perhaps thinking that her sex would save him, while she, poor girl! screamed with terror. In another instant he was dragged from the carriage and stabbed to death with many wounds, in vain begging for mercy. The bloody work being done, the assassins mounted their horses and galloped off, leaving the body of the murdered prelate lying on the moor.*

There were some in Scotland who applauded the deed, as there are some in every country who justify assassination in such circumstances still. But the great majority of the people condemned it as a foul murder. There were few, however, who greatly lamented the murdered man. A

* Wodrow's History, vol. iii.

monument in white marble, reared by filial affection, in the Town Church of St Andrews, still remains to his memory; but history belies his epitaph, and posterity still regards him as the Judas of the Scottish Church.

The See of St Andrews, the second dignity in the kingdom, had been as fatal to its possessors as had the throne to the Stewarts. Beaton was assassinated in his castle at St Andrews; Hamilton was hanged on a gibbet at Stirling; Adamson died in beggary, and of a broken heart; and now Sharp lay murdered on Magus Moor.

CHAPTER VI.

A.D. 1679. WHEN news of the archbishop's murder reached Edinburgh, the Privy Council issued a proclamation, offering a large reward for the apprehension of his murderers; but they had fled to the west, where they were in the midst of men prepared to resist the officers of justice. A few days later the Council issued another proclamation, declaring conventicles to be the rendezvouses of rebellion, and that persons attending them with arms would be punished as traitors.* But proclamations of the Council could not prevent what was inevitable. The west was ripe for rebellion; and the crisis was hastened by the presence of the desperadoes who had fled from Fife.

A few determined men resolved to give a public testimony against the sins of the government. They fixed upon the 29th of May as the most fitting day, being the anniversary of the Restoration. They had at first thought of making Glasgow the scene of their demonstration, but deterred by the presence of the military, they proceeded to Rutherglen, a small royal burgh about three miles further east, and there they boldly threw down the gauntlet. They extinguished the bonfires which were blazing in honour of the Restoration; they affixed to the market-cross a paper in which they denounced the various acts of parliament by which Presbyterianism had been overthrown, Prelacy established, and the country exposed to persecution; and then they burned the acts to which their declaration referred.†

* Wodrow's History, vol. iii. p. 58.

† A copy of the Rutherglen Declaration will be found in Wodrow, vol. iii. pp. 66, 67. See also Law's Memorable Things, p. 149.

This daring deed made a considerable noise both in Edinburgh and Glasgow. Grahame of Claverhouse, who at this time held a commission as captain in a regiment of horse, and had already distinguished himself by his zeal in hunting down the Covenanters, was stationed at Glasgow; and on Saturday, the 31st of May, proceeded to Hamilton in search of the men who had defied the government. He there seized an intercommuned minister, and some other Presbyterians, but not of those who had been present at Rutherglen. He learned, however, that Thomas Douglas, a well-known Covenanting minister, was to preach the next day at Loudon Hill, and he determined to march thither and disperse the conventicle.

To the south of the village of Strathaven the country becomes high and moorland, a heathy waste stretches out on every side as far as the eye can reach, and there is nothing to relieve the dull dreariness of the landscape but the towering form of Loudon Hill. In this desolate region the Covenanters met to worship their God, in their own fashion, on the Sabbath morning of the 1st of June. The stern and rugged character of the scenery harmonized with the stern and rugged character of the men. Several of those who had been at Rutherglen were there. The simple services were begun, when the watch stationed on the top of the hill gave the alarm that a body of military was approaching; and soon afterwards Claverhouse and his dragoons were observed on the rising ground betwixt them and Strathaven. Being mostly armed, they resolved to fight rather than to flee, and sending their women and children to the rear, they advanced to a swampy piece of ground near Drumclog, and there awaited the approach of their enemy. The Covenanters, though undisciplined, were determined; and after a sharp skirmish Claverhouse was compelled to sound a retreat, leaving some twenty or thirty of his troopers dead on the heath.*

Elated by this success, the Covenanters marched the next day upon Glasgow; but after some fighting with the military, who had barricaded the streets, they retired towards

* Wodrow, vol. iii. p. 69. See also Scots Worthies, Lives of Paton, Nisbet, &c., and Appendix.

Hamilton, where they formed a camp. The disaffected from every part of the country hastened to join them, and in a few days they could count four or five thousand men. But it was a desperate enterprise in which they were engaged. How could these four or five thousand hope to withstand the military power of three kingdoms? But oppression makes wise men mad, and when the blood is up we do not nicely calculate the odds. Burnet declared before the House of Commons that the Duke of Lauderdale had once said to him, that he wished the Presbyterians would rebel, that he might bring over an army of Papists from Ireland to cut their throats;* and something like a rebellion had now taken place. This army of Irish cut-throats was not brought over; but the Privy Council called out the militia of the eastern and northern counties, and ordered every heritor and freeholder, with as many retainers and friends as he could muster, to turn out well mounted, so as to form a corps of cavalry. Intelligence of every movement was sent by flying packets, as they were called, to London; and the king ordered several English regiments to get in readiness to march to Scotland, and appointed his natural son, the Duke of Monmouth, to the command-in-chief.†

On the 18th of June the Duke of Monmouth arrived in Edinburgh, and on the same day was admitted a Privy Councillor. It soon became known that his gentle nature inclined him to clemency, though his commission required that the insurrection should be crushed. On the 19th he placed himself at the head of the army, and proceeding westward by slow marches, found himself on the 21st within two miles of the Covenanters, who were encamped at Hamilton Moor, on the south bank of the River Clyde.

In the meantime the Covenanters, or Whigs,‡ as they were sometimes called, instead of scouring their muskets and learning their drill, were waging with one another a fierce polemical warfare. They wished to make proclamation of

* History of his Own Times, vol. ii.

† Wodrow's History, vol. iii. p. 72–75.

‡ The members of the Reformed Presbyterian Church—the descendants of the Covenanters—are known throughout Galloway to this day by the name of Whigs.

the causes for which they were in arms. Some insisted on including the Indulgence as a thing utterly Erastian and sinful, and others protested against this. They wished to have a fast-day to mourn over their sins; but when they came to enumerate these, the Indulgence again became a bone of contention, and no fast-day was held. Some were for still acknowledging the king according to the Covenant; but others wished to renounce him, as he had renounced the Covenant and persecuted the saints. Councils of war were converted into arenas of theological strife. Ministers sitting on horseback preached to the people. The men gave to their officers just so much obedience as they chose. Infatuation went still farther. Robert Hamilton, brother of Sir William Hamilton of Preston, had hitherto held the chief command. He had been present at Rutherglen; he had acted with conspicuous bravery at Drumclog; and had, without any special election, been tacitly invested with the rank of general. But his capabilities for command were now questioned; and his connection with the fanatical party who testified against the Indulgence and the king made all who held more moderate views regard him with dislike. When the columns of the Duke of Monmouth were in view, it was actually proposed to cashier all the old officers and nominate new ones in their stead, and the debate ran so high that Hamilton and some of his friends left the meeting in fierce anger.

On Sabbath morning the 22d of June, the royal army was drawn out in order of battle on Bothwell Moor, then an open common, but now converted into a region of pleasant fields and fruitful orchards. A deputation from the Presbyterian host sought the duke to supplicate for terms of peace. The duke received them kindly, but told them they must lay down their arms as a preliminary to negotiation; if they did so, he promised he would use his best offices with the king on their behalf. This message increased dissensions. Some were for yielding; some thought it was too much to ask them to lay down their arms; some would not listen to any terms with an uncovenanted king. Many still imagined themselves secure of victory, for the preachers

had predicted it, and Donald Cargill had declared that the very windle-straws would rise up and fight in their favour.

The River Clyde flowed between the two armies, too deep to be forded; but its banks were connected by a long and narrow bridge, with a gateway in the centre. The Covenanters had barricaded this gateway; and three hundred picked men were appointed to defend it, under the command of Hackston of Rathillet, one of the determined outlaws who had murdered the primate. This handful of men kept their post till their ammunition failed; and when they sent for more, they were insanely commanded by Hamilton to fall back upon the main army. The Royalists now began to defile along the bridge, and to form in line on the opposite bank. One hope still remained for the Covenanters. Had they charged while only a part of the royal army was on their side of the river, and still imperfectly formed, the day might have been theirs. But such promptitude of action was out of the question with such an undisciplined and divided rabble. They were already beginning to fall into confusion. At the first discharge of artillery, the cavalry wheeled about and fled. Some affirmed it was the untrained horses that would not stand fire; others suspected it was their riders. In a few minutes more, the whole multitude were fleeing from the field. Few were slain in the action, but about four hundred were butchered in the flight, and upwards of a thousand surrendered themselves as prisoners.*

Next day the prisoners were marched to Edinburgh; and as there was no jail large enough to hold them, they were driven like a flock of sheep into the Greyfriars Churchyard. They were kept there for four or five months, day and night, exposed to all weathers, and guarded by sentries, placed at the gate and along the walls. There were two ministers among them—King and Kid—and they were both hanged

* This account of the Rising at Bothwell is taken from Russel, Wodrow, Law, and Crookshank. Sir Walter Scott, in his "Old Mortality," has given very vivid pictures of the battles of Drumclog and Bothwell Bridge; and though he has felt himself at liberty to draw upon his fancy for the details, he has in the great outlines observed historical accuracy. He is wrong in representing General Dalziel as present at the battle. His commission as lieutenant-general did not arrive till the day the battle was fought.

at the Grassmarket. Five others were sent to Magus Moor, and executed there, as a bloody atonement for the murder of Sharp. Two hundred and fifty were destined for Barbadoes, to be sold as slaves. They were huddled together in the hold of a small vessel at Leith, and began to experience all the horrors of the middle passage. But their miseries were not long continued. The vessel was wrecked upon one of the Orkney Islands during a storm; and as the hatchways were nailed down, two hundred of them went to the bottom. Those who escaped the fatal shipment appear to have signed a bond pledging themselves to keep the peace, and, upon doing so, were liberated.

Towards the end of July, through the humane exertions of Monmouth, an Act of Indemnity was passed to all who had been at Bothwell, on condition that they solemnly promised never to appear in arms against his Majesty again, and abstained from frequenting field conventicles.* About the same time, an act was published allowing the Presbyterian ministers not yet indulged to preach and administer the sacraments in private houses, if they desisted from holding meetings in the fields. Comparatively few took advantage of the Act of Indemnity; and the third Indulgence, as it was called, was soon withdrawn.

The south and west were again overrun with a lawless soldiery, eagerly seeking out those who had been present at Bothwell, and had not accepted the Indemnity. Torture and threats were employed to get at the truth. The thumbkins, which are said to have been introduced from Russia by General Dalziel, were found to be an effectual and portable instrument for eliciting secrets amid screams of agony. When these were not at hand, lighted matches, placed between the fingers, were found to do almost as well. It is probable that the imagination, filled with the tales of horror which are still told at the firesides of the peasantry, may have exaggerated the truth; but it must have been a melancholy and miserable time.

There had grown up among the persecuted Presbyterians a class of men who were sterner, more uncompromising,

* A copy of the proclamation is given in Wodrow, vol. iii. p. 118.

more fanatical, than their brethren. They utterly reprobated the Indulgence; they refused to pay cess; they threw off their allegiance to a king who had violated his Covenant engagements. They refused to have any communion with their more compliant Presbyterian brethren, and formed themselves into a number of distinct societies, and called themselves the Society people. Their most distinguished minister was Richard Cameron, and from him they were sometimes named Cameronians; as, from the life of outlaws which many of them led among the moors and mountains, they were frequently spoken of as the Wanderers, the Hill-men, or the wild Whigs.

On the 3d of June 1680, Hall of Haughhead, known to be one of these, travelling in company with Donald Cargill, was killed at Queensferry in a scuffle with the Governor of Blackness, who wished to apprehend him. On his person was found an unsigned paper, afterwards known as the Queensferry Declaration, in which the king was solemnly rejected, as having manifestly rejected God; monarchy was repudiated, as leading to tyranny; and a resolution taken to set up a government in obedience to the commandment in Exodus xviii. 21—"Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people, able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness, and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties and rulers of tens."*

This paper was never recognised by the party to whom it was attributed; but on the 22d of June a band of twenty-one men, headed by Cameron and Cargill, entered the burgh of Sanquhar, marched up its street with drawn swords, and halting at the market-cross, read and then posted up a declaration, in which they disowned Charles Stewart because of his tyranny and breaches of Covenant, and proclaimed themselves prepared, as the Lord should give them opportunity, to do to all who were against them as they had done to them.† Thus these twenty-one men manfully threw off

* A copy of this singular document is to be found among Somers's Tracts, vol. i. col. 2, p. 502. It is also given by Wodrow, vol. iii. p. 207.

† This document is also given both by Somers (vol. i. col. 2, p. 509) and

their allegiance, and proclaimed war to the knife against government. They henceforward refused to have any intercourse with their brethren who recognised the king, and banded themselves together by a mutual bond of defence. We may laugh at them as mad fanatics for thus desperately kicking against the pricks; but, casting aside the rashness of the enterprise, were they not well warranted to do as they did? Had they not suffered sufficiently to entitle them to throw off their allegiance? Had not the limit of endurance been reached; and are there not instincts in the bosom which at this point convert obedience into resistance? Did not the parliaments of England and Scotland, eight years afterwards, do exactly what these twenty-one desperate men now did? The deed may then have been more respectable, but was it more righteous, and was it not much less heroic? These men were bigoted, but they were self-devoted. Like the old Roman, they leaped into the gulf, and saved their country.

This bold defiance hurled at the throne led to a royal proclamation, in which, after some uncomfortable recollections of the fate of Charles I., large rewards were offered for the apprehension of Cameron and Cargill, dead or alive. Meanwhile these famous outlaws, accompanied by a few followers, wandered about the moorland districts of Galloway and Ayr, preaching whenever an opportunity presented; and the poorest peasant scorned the five thousand merks offered for their head. But the career of Cameron was now nearly run. On the 20th of July a band of sixty-three of the wild Whigs were surprised by the military at Airsmoss, in the parish of Auchinleck. They resolved to fight, and the indomitable Hackston took the command. But, as might have been expected, the twofold numbers and higher discipline of the Royalists bore down the stubborn resistance of the rebels. Cameron was killed. He is said to have prayed, before the battle, "Lord, take the ripe and spare the green;" and perhaps in his own death his prayer

Wodrow (vol. iii. p. 212). Its title is characteristic—"The Declaration and Testimony of the True Presbyterian, Anti-Prelatic, and Anti-Erastian and Persecuted Party in Scotland."

was answered. Hackston, covered with wounds, was taken a prisoner, marched into Edinburgh, with the bloody head of Cameron carried before him, and shortly afterwards condemned to death, with accompaniments which revolt every sentiment of humanity, and make us believe that our country was yet in the depths of barbarism. First his right hand, and then his left, was cut off. He was then hanged, but cut down before life was extinct; and his heart, still palpitating, torn from his bosom, and held up to the people as the heart of a traitor.*

Donald Cargill now alone remained to bear up the banner of the Covenant. Though persecuted, he was not forsaken. He suddenly appeared in different parts of the country; the faithful few rallied around him, and he preached to them those thrilling sermons about a perjured king, a broken Covenant, and a sinful land, which their souls loved. In the month of October a larger assemblage than usual gathered around him at Torwood in Stirlingshire; and after one of his characteristic sermons, the dauntless Covenanter solemnly excommunicated, and delivered over to the devil, the King, the Duke of York, the Duke of Lauderdale, General Dalziel, Sir George Mackenzie, and some others, for their breach of Covenant and persecution of God's people.† Many regard this as simply ludicrous—a hair-brained fanatic, fed upon the husks of Old Testament history, and rendered savage by the savage life which he led, venting his impotent curses upon the Lord's anointed. Others imagine it verges upon the sublime—a solitary wanderer, but of earnest mind, strong in the righteousness of his cause, strong in the conviction

* See the Cloud of Witnesses. Also Wodrow, vol. iii., and the Scots Worthies. The skirmish at Airsmoss has been celebrated in verses full of poetic genius, said to have been written by a shepherd lad. They are not so well known as they deserve to be. The first verse is—

"In a dream of the night I was wafted away
To the muirlands of mist, where the martyrs lay,—
Where Cameron's sword and his Bible are seen,
Engraved on the stone where the heather grows green," &c.

† The form of this extraordinary anathema is to be found in the Appendix to the Cloud of Witnesses. Both Wodrow and the "Cloud" make the Torwood meeting held in September; but the royal proclamation, issued in consequence of it, speaks of it as having been held in October. For a copy of the proclamation, see Wodrow, vol. iii. pp. 229, 230.

that his anathemas pronounced on earth would be ratified in heaven, giving over wicked men, though high and mighty, to God's just judgments. They think they see in it a counterpart to Martin Luther's burning the Pope's bull at the gates of Wittemberg. It is certain that in a little while Donald Cargill died on the scaffold, and Charles II. died in his bed; but yet a little while again, and the Stewarts were driven from the throne, and the principles of the Covenanters, shorn of their extravagances, triumphed.

A.D. 1681. In the year 1681 the Duke of York came down to Scotland. He had a purpose in coming. His conversion to Popery was no longer a secret, and the English House of Commons more than once had passed a bill to cut off his succession to the throne, and it was only the opposition of the king and the peers which had prevented it from becoming law. It was confidently anticipated that the ever-tractable parliament of Scotland would show an example of passive obedience to the Commons of England. On the 28th of July the Estates assembled at Edinburgh, and the Duke of York took his place as the representative of Majesty. Their first act, according to custom, was for securing the Protestant religion, as then established. Their second act seemed to be made in mockery of the first. It was anent the succession to the imperial crown. It asserted that the kings of the realm derived their royal power from God Almighty alone; that they succeeded to it by lineal descent; that no difference of religion, that no acts of parliament, could alter the succession; and that any one who gainsayed this was guilty of high treason. Thus the old uncompromising Protestantism of the nation succumbed before the Divine right of kings.

These acts were followed by another, which, under the plea of securing the peace of the country, enacted new rigours against the frequenters of conventicles. But the act which made the greatest noise was known as the Test Act. It required every person who held a public office, from the privy councillor down to the exciseman, to swear that he owned the true Protestant religion as explained in the Confession of 1567; that he acknowledged the king to be su-

preme in all causes and over all persons, both civil and ecclesiastical; that he would never consult about any matter of State without his Majesty's express license or command; and never endeavour any alteration in the government of the country.* The parliament showed that patriotism had long since left the house where they sat by passing this act, and dooming the country to oriental despotism.

The act strikes with impartial severity both Papists and Presbyterians. But it soon appeared that it was to be put in execution only against the latter. The royal family was specially excluded, although it was argued that the faith of the king was of infinitely more importance to the welfare of the nation than that of the subject. There were Papists both in the civil and military departments, and they were little troubled; but we shall soon find the test made a terrible engine of oppression against the unhappy Presbyterians.

But this was not all. There were difficulties which had not been anticipated. The Confession of 1567 had long lain neglected, but people now began to look into it, and the Episcopalians found several things in it which they did not like. Some even said that one clause contemplated the possibility of resistance to royal authority, as might have been expected from the men who framed it, and that thus the oath was self-contradictory.† Of course it was not to be expected that the rigid Presbyterians could acknowledge the king's supremacy in ecclesiastical causes; but the Episcopalians stumbled at the same thing. The royal prerogative might very properly be employed in overturning Presbyterianism, but it might not be put forth to meddle with Episcopacy. Had not the bishops their sees *jure divino*, just as the king had his throne? Politicians had ob-

* Acts of the Scotch Parliament, Charles II., August 1681.

† The clause referred to is in chapter xxiv., Of the Civil Magistrate. It runs: "Therefore, we confess and avow that such as resist the supreme powers (doing that which pertaineth to their charge) do resist God's ordinance, and therefore cannot be guiltless." The parenthesis was thought to put a limit upon the magistrate's power and the subject's obedience. The chapter, however, as a whole, is very strong in regard to the power of the magistrate and the sin of resisting. Many would now hesitate to subscribe what is said, especially in regard to magisterial power in ecclesiastical affairs.

jections of another kind. If they swore, as they were required, never to attempt any alteration in the government either of the Church or State, how could parliament exercise its functions—how could it pass even a single act?

The opposition of the clergy became so formidable that an explanation tending to smooth down difficulties, proposed by the Bishop of Edinburgh, was converted into an act of Council, and received the sanction of the king. This satisfied some, who forthwith took the test. Others, however, argued that the explanation was inconsistent with the test, and that no act of Council could alter the obvious meaning of words.* Nearly eighty of the clergy remained firm, and left their parishes rather than take an oath which their consciences condemned.†

The Earl of Argyle delayed as long as possible taking the test; and when he could put off no longer, he prefaced it by a statement, that he took it only in so far as it was consistent with itself and with the Protestant religion, and that he did not understand it as precluding him from attempting, in a lawful way, any alteration in Church or State which might be in accordance with his loyalty and religion. This explanation was accepted at the time, and by the invitation of the Duke of York he resumed his seat at the council-table; but a few days afterwards he was committed to the Castle of Edinburgh, charged with treason, for having given to a statute a meaning which parliament did not intend that it should bear. When his trial came on, the judges, by a majority of one, found that the libel was relevant—in other words, that the explanation which Argyle had given of his oath was treason; and as he did not attempt to deny the fact, he was found guilty.‡ He managed, however, to escape from the castle in disguise, and fled to Holland; but the abuse of law, the disregard of decency in his trial, made a deep impression on the public mind, long accustomed though it had been to see the courts of justice prostituted to the purposes of oppression. "I know nothing of the Scotch law," said Halifax to King Charles; "but this I know, that

* Wodrow's Hist., vol. iii. p. 309. † Burnet's Hist., vol. ii.

‡ Wodrow, vol. iii. pp. 312–39. See also Burnet, vol. ii.

we should not hang a dog here on the grounds on which my Lord Argyle has been sentenced."*

A.D. 1682. In January 1682, about fifty of the unflinching Cameronians entered the town of Lanark, with arms in their hands, published a declaration of their peculiar opinions, and burned the Test and Succession Acts. The Council, apparently copying their example, a few days afterwards burned the Solemn League and Covenant, together with the Rutherglen, Sanquhar, and Lanark Declarations, at the Cross of Edinburgh.

In the month of May the Duke of York returned to England, and the bishops and the Council vied with each other in loading him with adulation. He went, but the blessings of the country did not go with him. His harsh and imperious temper, independently of his religious belief, made him to be disliked. It had been observed that when poor wretches were tortured before the Council, while the other Councillors fled from the room, the duke kept his seat and looked on, just as if some curious experiments were being made.†

During the years 1682 and 1683, the lawless soldiery continued to harass the country. They carried terror amid the quiet dwellers in the villages, they pillaged farmhouses, they traversed the loneliest moors. Armed with almost irresponsible powers, the worst passions of human nature were developed within them; accustomed to act as the agents of government in exacting free quarters, levying fines, and securing prisoners, they imagined themselves entitled to do just as they pleased; and the people in general, though scandalized by their licentiousness and blasphemies, and burning under a sense of wrong, submitted to their extortions and insults, knowing how dangerous it was to give them offence. Strange stories, however, were told of their great wickedness; of how, in their drunken revels, they sometimes personated devils, called each other by satanic names, and caricatured the punishments of hell.‡

Conspicuous among the persecutors of the unhappy Presbyterians was Sir John Grahame of Claverhouse. We have

* Lord Macaulay's Hist., vol. ii. p. 115. † Burnet's Hist., vol. ii.
‡ Wodrow's History, vol. iv. p. 242.

already seen him defeated at Drumclog; but he afterwards attempted to wipe out the disgrace at Bothwell, where he commanded the cavalry, and cut down the fugitives without mercy, as they fled from the field. Raised to the dignity of a Privy Councillor for his services, we constantly find him scouring the west country, and acquiring that unenviable renown, as a persecutor of the saints, which still throws a dark shade over the chivalrous name of the Viscount Dundee. He is said to have been of a slim figure, with almost feminine features, and very graceful manners; but the wanderers whom he hunted on the hills represented him as a monster rather than a man. Bullets were said to rebound harmless from his body, which was believed to be sold to the devil; and the very horse which he rode was supposed to possess a charmed life. His apologists say that his rigour resulted not from any cruelty of nature, but from his Royalist principles, and that in the circumstances in which he was placed severity was the truest mercy. They tell that Cromwell, the great hero of the Puritanic age, murdered hundreds of Irish Celts for every Scottish peasant whom Claverhouse shot down, and so gave peace to a country which had never known it before. But we need not exculpate Cromwell to condemn Claverhouse. He did cruel things whatever was the motive that impelled him; and is justly odious as the tool of a tyrant in forcing upon his own countrymen, at the point of the sword, a religion they abhorred.

Sir George Mackenzie occupied the same place in the forum which Sir John Grahame occupied in the field. If the colonel of dragoons caught a frequenter of conventicles, the Lord Advocate was sure to secure his conviction. He would browbeat witnesses and juries for the pleasure of sending him to the gallows. Yet Sir George Mackenzie had his line of duty, beyond which he would not go; and when James VII. began his Popish plots, he resigned his place. Still further, he was not only an able lawyer, but a scholarly man, and enriched the literature of his country by "Institutes of the Law of Scotland;" "A Defence of the Royal Line;" "A Vindication of his Government;" and a "History of his Times." His conversation sparkled with wit. John Dryden

declares that he was unacquainted with the beautiful turn of words and thoughts in poetry till they were explained to him in a conversation "with that noble wit of Scotland, Sir George Mackenzie." Thus both in the soldier and the lawyer, unrelenting cruelty wore the fine livery of politeness and learning. It were endless to chronicle every instance of oppression which occurred. The mind, in fact, turns away with loathing from the recital. Multitudes were ruinously fined; others were sent to the West Indies as slaves; others were hanged. Many, succumbing to these terrors, gave a reluctant attendance at church; others turned their eyes towards America as a place of refuge from their manifold wrongs. We shall relate only two cases which happened about this time, and which very well exemplify what was going on.

A Mr Weir of Blakewood, factor to the Marquis of Douglas, was accused of treason for having kept company with a man said to have been at Bothwell. Blakewood pled that the man referred to had never been marked out in any government proclamation as a traitor, that he had been living for years quietly in his own house without molestation, and that there was no proof that he knew him to have been in arms against the government. The Court, however, held that the law must presume that he was cognizant of the fact, and upon that found him guilty of treason, as an aider and abettor of traitors.* The day of his execution was fixed; and though he was subsequently reprieved, it was felt that after this no man's neck was safe from a halter.

A poor ignorant woman, named Christian Fyfe, was brought before the Justiciary Court, and at once confessed that she had assaulted the Episcopal minister in the Old Kirk, at the end of the sermon, as she thought him profaning the Sabbath. She further acknowledged that she thought the king no lawful king, the judges no lawful judges; that it was good service to slay the bishops, and that she herself had gone to the church not to hear but to beat the minister, as she believed him to be no lawful minister, but

* Burnet's History, vol. ii. p. 141.

a Judas and a devil. The Court might very properly have sent this poor creature to a lunatic asylum, or committed her to the care of her friends; but instead of that, they sentenced her to be hanged.*

The year 1683 was signalized by the Rye-house Plot. The English conspirators, among whom were Monmouth, Shaftesbury, Russell, and Sidney, knowing the sufferings of the Scotch Presbyterians, had opened up communications with them, and some of their chief men, among whom was Baillie of Jerviswood, entered keenly into the plot. A correspondence with the Earl of Argyle in Holland was also begun, and a descent upon Scotland for the purpose of overturning the government proposed. It would farther appear that some of the English plotters had canvassed plans for the assassination of the king and the duke; but the principal conspirators always denied their knowledge of such designs. The discovery of the plot not only sent Lord Russell and Algernon Sidney to the scaffold, but brought new calamities upon Scotland.

In March 1684, Sir Hugh Campbell of Cessnock was indicted before the Criminal Court. He was suspected of being implicated in the Rye-house Plot, but as this could not be proved, he was charged with harbouring intercommuned rebels, and being connected with the rising at Bothwell. The proof fairly broke down, and notwithstanding the efforts of the advocate to browbeat the jury, they returned a verdict of not guilty. Notwithstanding the verdict, Cessnock was still detained in prison, on the plea that he was the king's prisoner,† and his estates were divided among the minions of the court.

The English authorities had laid hold of a Mr Spence, who had been secretary to the Earl of Argyle, and of the Rev. William Carstares, afterwards Principal of the University of Edinburgh, both of whom were suspected to be in possession of secrets in regard to the Rye-house Plot. But how were these secrets to be extorted from them? There was no proof, and the English law humanely forbade the use of torture. Not to be beat, the government sent them down

* Wodrow's History, vol. iii. p. 410. † Ibid. vol. iv. pp. 72–84.

to Scotland, where the disgraceful practice had been revived. Spence was subjected to the torture of the boot; but he remained firm. He was next delivered to General Dalziel, who appointed some soldiers to guard him night and day, and prevent him from closing his eyes for a moment in sleep. For some days this went on, and still he was silent. Torture was again threatened, when he agreed to reveal all that he knew, as it was almost all known already; but in one of the letters which he deciphered, Carstares was mentioned.

Carstares' time was now come. The king's smith came into court with thumbkins of an improved construction, and these being fastened upon his hand and tightly screwed, the sweat streamed over his brow and down his face with the terrible agony he endured. The Duke of Hamilton and the Earl of Queensberry could not stand the sight; and after remarking to the chancellor that they saw the poor man would rather die than confess, they left the room. The chancellor only ordered the executioner to screw the instrument tighter, and Carstares screamed out that all his bones were broken. For an hour and a half this dreadful torment was endured, but still no secret was let out. It was now proposed to put the boots upon his legs, but the executioner being a novice could not adjust the wedges, and so Carstares escaped the double torment. Torture having failed, negotiation was tried, and Carstares, in order to avoid a renewal of his sufferings, undertook to answer certain questions, provided that he received a full pardon, and was never used as a witness against any one. His terms were accepted, he answered the questions agreed upon, and was afterwards allowed to retire to Holland, with many important secrets still buried in his breast.*

Baillie of Jerviswood had been lying in prison for some months, sick, and to all human appearance dying. But the criminal prosecutor, Sir George Mackenzie, was relentless, and resolved to anticipate the slow hand of disease. Jerviswood was raised from his bed, and brought into court, charged with being accessory to the Rye-house Plot. The evidence

* M'Cormick's Life of Carstares, pp. 19, 20. Wodrow's History, vol. iv. p. 71.

was so meagre that the advocate was compelled, contrary to promise, to employ Carstares' declaration to confirm it, and thus secured a verdict of guilty. This done, the feeble old invalid was hurried, with scarce an hour's delay, from the bar to the gibbet. All his contemporaries bear witness to his learning and worth, his zeal for liberty, and his devotion to religion.* But it may be said these men were put to torture and death as political conspirators—they perilled their lives on a cast of the die, and it was right they should pay the forfeit. It is quite true; but in those days religion and politics were closely intertwined. It was of religious oppression that the Scotch complained; it was a Popish ruler that both England and Scotland feared.

The discovery of the Rye-house Plot, and the continuance of conventicles, led the government to increase their cruelty against the Presbyterians. After fourteen years of bloody persecution, it was announced that gentleness had failed, and that severity must be tried. The simple fact that in the month of May a proclamation was issued, with a roll of nearly two thousand persons, who are described as fugitives from law, and destined to condign punishment, gives an idea of the sad state into which the country was sunk.† But it was against the Society people that the sharpest edge of the persecution was turned. "They were killed all the day long, they were counted as sheep for the slaughter." Their utter extermination seemed to be determined upon. Every man's hand was against them, and they naturally turned their hand against every man. They had already thrown off their allegiance, they now resolved to make it known that they would not submit to be tamely butchered. In the beginning of November, they posted up at several market-crosses and parish churches throughout Nithsdale, Ayr, Lanark, and Galloway, their Apologetic Declaration. In this document they referred to their hardships, they proclaimed their principles, they repudiated the idea of killing all who differed from them; but they stated their stern resolve to regard all who took a part in their persecution—

* Wodrow's History, vol. iv. pp. 105–12. Crookshank, &c.

† This proscription roll is given by Wodrow, vol. iv.

judges, soldiers, informers, false witnesses—as enemies to God and His covenanted work, and to punish them accordingly. They warned all bloody Doegs and flattering Ziphites to beware, for they would not be so slack-handed in the future as they had been in the past—"All that is in peril is not lost, all that is delayed is not forgiven;" and, finally, they called upon all to come and strengthen their hands in holding up the standard of the Lord Jesus Christ, as He was about to appear and bring light out of darkness.*

These desperate men had determined to take law into their own hand. Were they justified in doing so? Were their principles the principles of patriots, or the principles of assassins? William Wallace and Robert Bruce took the law into their own hands, and slew their enemies wherever they were to be found. Oliver Cromwell and his Roundheads took the law into their own hands, and smote the Cavaliers with the edge of the sword. Were they simply assassins? Is it the righteousness of the cause, or the numbers who join it, or its ultimate success, which is its true warrant? These are fine questions for the casuist to determine.

The Apologetic Declaration carried terror into many breasts. Several curates, afraid of their lives, abandoned their parishes. Magistrates and informers could not go out in the dark, scarcely in the day, for fear of being shot down by some unseen hand. The very soldiery required to be more on their guard. A keen marksman from behind a dyke might empty a saddle, and be off in a twinkling. But government had now a stronger pretext than ever to hunt these men down as professed murderers; and they did not fail to take advantage of it. An oath, solemnly abjuring the Declaration, was formed. Different officers were commissioned to proceed to different parts of the country, with a sufficient military force. The inhabitants were to be brought before them, and if any one hesitated to take the Abjuration Oath, he was to be shot upon the spot. To make matters still more sure, no one was to be allowed to pass from one part of the country to another, without carrying with him a

* A copy of this document is given by Wodrow, vol. iv. p. 149.

certificate of his loyalty, and this he could obtain only by taking the Abjuration Oath.

We now enter upon the most melancholy period in the history of the Church. The furnace into which the children of the Covenant were to be cast was heated seven times. Hitherto the law, however abused, had afforded some security to the lieges; but now all law was to be laid aside, and they were to be handed over to the tender mercies of a soldiery, brutalized by the work they had to do. No man was safe from their violence. Their form of process was very simple and very brief. A few questions generally decided their verdict. Do you think the slaughter of the archbishop was murder? Was the rising at Bothwell rebellion? Will you take the Test Oath? Will you take the Abjuration Oath? Will you pray for the king? The peasantry were generally too conscientious to tell a lie, often too scrupulous to take an oath, and sometimes too simple to understand the meaning of the questions which were put; and the answers which they gave determined whether they were to live or die. Sentence being pronounced, a file of soldiers with loaded carbines carried it into instant execution. The victim was asked to draw his bonnet over his eyes, and the next moment he fell dead or dying to the ground. Thus many were shot by the wayside, in the fields, at their own door. The soldiers had their own code of honour, and were generally unwilling to shoot women, but women did not therefore escape. Tied to stakes within tide-mark, they were left to perish in the advancing waves. If there be some who at all times regard life as a misfortune, inasmuch as they would rather have never been born than have to die, how much more bitter must they have felt existence to be when life was thus bound to a continual body of death.

But while these scenes were going on, some of the principal actors were removed from the stage. In 1682 the Duke of Lauderdale died. During 1684 Archbishop Leighton breathed his last. Ten years before this he had retired from his bishopric and gone to England, weary of beholding the strife of religious parties, and hopeless of doing good. He had often expressed a wish that he might die in an inn;

he would there be free from the lamentations of friends, which disturb the preparations of the parting spirit, and would be like a pilgrim about to start for his heavenly home; and in an inn he died.* In February of the following year, a very different man was called to his account. Charles II. ascended the throne as the choice of the nation, rather than as its hereditary prince; but he forgot the history of his father, and the incidents of his own early life, and reigned as an arbitrary king. He is said to have had an exquisite taste, and most insinuating manners; but it is certain he was utterly destitute of principle. What is more, as if trained in the school of Hobbes, he believed all others as destitute of it as himself; and that modesty, virtue, and piety were but respectable names for hypocrisy and selfishness. He degraded England from a first-class power into a pensioner of France; he inflicted greater sufferings upon Scotland than any monarch before or since; he scandalized the whole country by his open profligacy; and finally he gave the lie to the religion he had professed all his life, by receiving on his deathbed the sacrament from a Roman Catholic priest.

The accession of James VII. brought no relief to the suffering Presbyterians. His harsh temper, despotic principles, and Roman faith gave rise to a well-grounded alarm that not only Presbyterianism, but Protestantism, was in danger. He, indeed, exercised his attribute of mercy, by publishing an Act of Indemnity; but it extended only to the poorest peasantry, and required the oath of allegiance to be taken before it could be claimed. Otherwise the work of persecution went on. The Privy Council, the circuit courts, the military commissions, were all busy. Four men coming home from hearing Renwick preach were intercepted by a party of soldiers, and three of them were shot. Captain Bruce surprised six of the wanderers in Lochinkit Moor, in Galloway. Four of them were shot where they stood, and the other two were taken to Irongray, and hanged upon a tree. John Semphill lived quietly with his wife and children in the parish of Dailly. He had never borne arms

* Burnet's Own Times, vol. ii. p. 206.

against the government; but he abstained from going to church, and had sometimes given harbour to the poor wretches who had been intercommuned, and who, impelled by nakedness and want, sought his door. One evening his house was suddenly surrounded by the military; and when he attempted to escape by a window, some of them discharged their pieces at him, and he fell dead. John Brown of Priesthill, a poor man who earned a livelihood as a carrier and by cultivating a small moorland farm, was with little ceremony shot by Claverhouse at his own door, and in presence of his wife.* Two girls of the name of Wilson,

* This John Brown has become of late more than ever a historical personage. Lord Macaulay, following the narrative of Wodrow, has told his case with touching pathos. Professor Aytoun, in a review of this passage of Lord Macaulay's History, in a note to his "Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers," has attempted to throw discredit upon Wodrow, and so upon Macaulay. Last of all, Mr Napier has published "Memorials and Letters illustrative of the Life and Times of John Grahame of Claverhouse, Viscount Dundee," in which there is published to the world for the first time a letter from Claverhouse to the Lord Treasurer Queensberry, dated 3d May 1685, giving an account of the execution of Brown. The letter is as follows:—

LETTER, "*Grahame of Claverhouse to the Lord Treasurer Queensberry, 3d May* 1685.

"May it please your Grace,—On Friday last, amongst the hills betwixt Douglas and the Ploughlands, we pursued two fellows a great way through the mosses, and in end seized them. They had no arms about them, and denied they had any. But being asked if they would take the *abjuration*, the eldest of the two, called John Brown, refused it; nor would he swear not to rise in arms against the king, but said *he knew no king*. Upon which, and there being found bullets and match in his house, and treasonable papers, I cause shoot him dead; which he suffered very unconcernedly. The other, a young fellow, and his nephew, called *John Brownen*, offered to take the oath, but would not swear that he had not been at Newmills in arms at *rescuing of the prisoners*. So I did not know what to do with him. I was convinced that he was guilty, but saw not how to proceed against him. Wherefore, after he had said his prayers, and carabines presented to shoot him, I offered to him that, if he would make an ingenuous confession, and make a discovery that might be of any importance for the king's service, I should delay putting him to death, and plead for him. Upon which he confessed that he was at the attack of Newmills, and that he had come straight to the house of his uncle's on Sunday morning. In the time he was making this confession, the soldiers found out a house in the hill, under ground, that could hold a dozen of men, and there were swords and pistols in it; and this fellow declared that they belonged to his uncle, and that he had lurked in that place ever since Bothwell, where he was in arms. He confessed that he had a halbert, and

the elder of whom was eighteen, and the younger thirteen years of age, were sentenced to be drowned for refusing the

told who gave it him, about a month ago; and we have the fellow prisoner. He gave an account of the most part of those that were there. They were not above sixty; and they were all Galston and Newmills men, save a few out of Straven parish. He gave also account of a conventicle, kept by Renwick at the back of Carntable, where there were thirteen score of men in arms, mustered and exercised, of which number he was with his halbert. He tells us of another conventicle, about three months ago, kept near Loudonhill, and gives account of the persons were at both, and what children were baptized, particularly that at Carntable, which was about the time that Lieutenants Murray and Crichton should have let them escape. He also gives account of those who gave any assistance to his uncle; and we have seized thereupon the goodman of the upmost Ploughlands; and another tenant, about a mile below that, is fled. I doubt not, if we had time to stay, good use might be made of his confession. I have acquitted myself when I have told your Grace the case. He has been but a month or two with his halbert; and if your Grace thinks he deserves no mercy, justice will pass on him; for I having no commission of justiciary myself, have delivered him up to the lieutenant-general, to be disposed of as he pleases.—I am, my lord, your Grace's most humble servant, J. GRAHAME."

Wodrow's account of the murder is this:—"He (Brown) was in no way obnoxious to the government, except for not hearing the Episcopal ministers. This good man had come home, and was at his work near his own house in Priesthill, casting peats. Claverhouse was coming from Lesmahago with his troop of dragoons. Whether he had got any information of John's piety and nonconformity I cannot tell; but he caused bring him up to his own door, from the place where he was. I do not think they were at much trouble with him in interrogatories and questions. We see them now almost wearied of that leisurely way of doing business. Neither do any of my informations bear that the Abjuration Oath was offered to him. With some difficulty he was allowed to pray;"—and then follows an account of his prayer and parting with his wife and children, by which, we are told, the soldiers were so affected that they refused to shoot him; upon which Claverhouse shot him with his own hand; and when the poor woman told him he would yet have to give an account of his morning's work to God, he rode off, saying he would take God into his own hands. Wodrow farther tells us that Brown had been in hiding for some time; and it will be observed that he confesses his information was imperfect upon some points.

Now, taking this into account, I do not think that the two narratives essentially differ, or that Claverhouse makes himself appear a better man, or Brown a worse man, than Wodrow had represented them to be. Both narratives agree that Brown was apprehended among the hills, and brought home to his own cottage-door, and there shot dead. Both agree that Brown had been in hiding for some time. Wodrow mentions the wife and children; Claverhouse says nothing about them, for what did he care for them, and it was not his business to make the scene more pitiful than he could help. Wodrow represents Brown as dying with perfect resignation; Claverhouse says that he died very unconcernedly. The first was the Christian view of the matter; the

Abjuration Oath. The younger sister was saved, upon the payment of a hundred pounds sterling by her father. The

second was the dragoon's view of it. Wodrow says, that the troopers being reluctant to shoot the poor man, Claverhouse snatched a pistol himself and did it; Claverhouse, writing to the Lord Treasurer, says simply—"I caused shoot him dead," for no man likes to proclaim himself an executioner. Wodrow mentions the horrid and brutal oaths which Claverhouse swore, and which no doubt rung in the poor widow's ears so long as she lived; Claverhouse says nothing about these, for he was not bound, in making his report to the Marquis of Queensberry, to repeat his blasphemies. Wodrow says nothing about Brown having been at Bothwell; Claverhouse says that after he had caused shoot him, and *not till then*, he was told by his nephew he had been there.

Let us look at the narrative of the chivalrous Dundee, and see if it raises him in our estimation. At the head of a troop of dragoons he comes upon two men among the hills, and dragging them to the cabin where the elder lived, began to put those questions, upon the answers given to which the lives of the Scottish peasantry at that time depended. "Will you take the Abjuration Oath?" Brown would not take it; and in this he was not singular, for there were few Cameronians in all Scotland would have taken it. "Will you swear that you will never rise in arms against the king?" Brown would not swear this, and we imagine there are few people now living, including Mr Mark Napier, who would like to swear such an oath, even under the benign government of her present Majesty. It is now a maxim written in the constitution of the country, that there are circumstances in which a people may and ought to take arms. Brown was farther honest enough to say that he knew no king; for it was the theory of these poor people that there could be no king of a Covenanted land unless he were a Covenanter, and this is the theory of every member of the Reformed Presbyterian Church till the present day; but it is only their theory, and government does not think it necessary to shoot them or hang them for it. But there was something more to crown this man's treason. There were some matches and bullets found in his house—and, worst of all, some treasonable papers. What these treasonable papers were we are not told, and it is a little strange the Lord Treasurer is not told either, nor is it said they were forwarded for his lordship's perusal, as we should have imagined they would have been. I have a strong suspicion they were something like the Westminster Confession, or Rutherford's Letters, or Guthrie's Causes of God's Wrath—treasonable papers very likely to be found in the chest or on the shelf of a muirland farmer of that time. This was all, and for this Brown was shot dead at his own cottage-door, while his wife and children looked on.

But the worst is yet to be told. The younger man, horrified at the spectacle of his uncle weltering in his blood, violated his principles to save his life, and at once took the Abjuration Oath. But still he was not safe. Shortly before this the peasantry about Newmills had rescued some prisoners from the hands of the soldiery, and Brownen would not swear that he had not been present at the rescue. Claverhouse suspected that he had been present; and a soldier's suspicions in those days were quite sufficient warrant to take away a churl's life. He therefore ordered the man to say his prayers and prepare

elder, and a poor widow named M'Lauchlan, were tied to stakes within flood-mark in the River Blednock. The girl saw her aged companion in tribulation painfully perish, as she had been purposely fastened farthest out in the tide. Still her faith failed not; and though importuned by her friends to save her life by praying for the king and taking the oath, she steadfastly refused. Calmly she prepared herself for heaven, by singing psalms till her voice was

for death; and it was only when the carabines were pointed at his breast that the merciful colonel of dragoons held out to him the hope of life, upon condition that he would betray his friends. Had the man refused to do so, he would infallibly have been shot as his uncle was, on the bare suspicion that he had been at Newmills. The poor fellow, with death before his eyes, told the whole truth, and probably more than the truth; for the more he told, the more likely was he to be saved. He confessed that he himself had been at Newmills, and that his uncle had been at Bothwell—who was thus *found guilty after his execution* for an act of rebellion which had happened six years before. The youth further betrayed the neighbours who, in the kindness of their hearts, had sometimes ministered to the wants of his uncle; and one of these was seized, probably to pay with his life for his charity, and another saved himself only by flight.

But while these secrets were being extorted from the trembling renegade, the troopers discovered the underground hole in which the poor Covenanted outlaw had been accustomed to skulk for the last six years. There, we are told, they found some pistols and swords—we are not told how many—a whole magazine, or, which was much more likely, just so many as the man might require for his self-defence in case of a surprise.

Such is this tale of blood, as told by Claverhouse himself, who gives us a still lower idea of his character and military honour by not urging one plea for the young man's life, though he had promised to do so, but simply saying, "If your grace thinks he deserve no mercy, justice will pass on him;" and, "I have delivered him up to the lieutenant-general, to be disposed of as he pleases."

I suspect the general impression will be, that Mr Napier has done no service to his hero by publishing this letter. There is a *cold-bloodedness* in its tone which I do not like, and which few men will like. What horrid work it was which this Claverhouse had to do, and which he seems to have had a pleasure in doing—hunting down his poor countrymen and countrywomen, and butchering them in cold blood at their cabin-doors! I hope I am not wrong in saying that three-fourths of those who now hold her Majesty's commission would rather resign their commissions for ever than engage in such butcheries. The document, however, is very valuable, and every one must thank Mr Napier for its publication. It throws some additional light upon very sad times. It shows us both the agents and the agencies of despotism amongst a population both honest and pious, though somewhat fanatical, and perfectly loyal till they were goaded to rebellion. It tells all the more powerfully upon the heart, because it confines the attention to one particular case—would it were the only one, or would it were the worst!

choked by the slowly rising water; and, a little after, the slight ripple, and the air-bell rising to the surface, told she had breathed her last. Such were some of the scenes witnessed by Scotland in the early summer of 1685.

On the 3d day of April the Scottish Parliament met. The king, in his letter, declared his intention to maintain the prerogative in all its lustre, as the surest safeguard of the people's interests, and his resolution to protect their religion as established by law, and root out the murderers and assassins who neither feared God nor honoured the king. The Marquis of Queensberry, who acted as Commissioner, and the Earl of Perth, who had risen to the high post of Chancellor of the Kingdom by apostatizing to Popery, echoed in their speeches the sentiments of the royal letter. The first act, as usual, was for the security of the Protestant religion. The second act was a declaration and offer of duty. The Estates humbly acknowledged the great blessings which they owed "to the sacred race of their most glorious kings, and to the solid, absolute authority wherewith they were invested by the first and fundamental laws of the monarchy," and offered, with their lives and fortunes, to maintain King James VII. against all mortals. Having thus forged fetters for the nation, they proceeded to put them on. By their fourth act they declared, that persons who refused to give evidence in cases of treason, conventicles, or church irregularities, should be held as guilty of those crimes themselves. By their fifth act, they pronounced it to be treason to take or acknowledge the Covenants. By their sixth act, they made husbands responsible for their wives, in regard to attendance at church. By their eighth act, they declared that if any one preached at a conventicle, either in the house or the fields, or if any one were present as a hearer at a conventicle in the fields, he was to be punished with death and confiscation of goods.* Thus legislation against the preaching of the gospel by Presbyterian ministers had reached its climax —no more sanguinary law could be ordained. It is painful to peruse the records of these times, when every vestige of patriotism, and even of pity, appears to have left our unhappy

* Acts of the Scottish Parliament, James VII., April 1685.

country, and the nobles and gentry who sat in parliament were not ashamed to glory in their servitude, and become the instruments of intolerable cruelty.

While the parliament was yet sitting, the Earl of Argyle made a hostile landing on the western coast. The sentence of death which had been passed upon him for explaining the Test Act he considered as dissolving his allegiance; and safe in Holland, he had talked with other patriots there, who were exiles like himself, of the wrongs of their country, and had planned its deliverance. He was connected with the Rye House Plot. Its discovery delayed his projects; but now he thought the time was come. After much discussion, a plan of operations was agreed upon: Argyle was to effect a landing on the west of Scotland, and the Duke of Monmouth was to set sail six days later, and make a descent on the south coast of England. Macallum More accordingly embarked with a few friends, and, after a prosperous voyage, once more put his foot upon his native hills. At the summons of the fiery cross his faithful clansmen gathered around him, although their country was held by the Earl of Athol, as lieutenant, for the Crown. Argyle had calculated upon the support of the whole Presbyterian population of Scotland, and published a proclamation, in which he declared the abolition of Popery and Prelacy to be among the ends of his expedition. But he was deceived in his expectations. The disasters of Rullion Green and Bothwell Bridge, the executions and dragonades which had followed, had broken the spirit of all save the indomitable Cameronians, and the Cameronians would not join hands with a man who had disowned the Covenant, voted for the death of Cargill, and was not prepared to embrace their principles. Dissension preceded disaster. Argyle wisely wished to clear his country of enemies, and secure it as a basis of operations; his coadjutors, Sir Patrick Hume and Sir John Cochrane, insisted upon marching at once into the lowlands. The evil counsel was adopted; few came to join their standard; their followers were dispersed; and Argyle himself was caught at Inchinnan, when attempting to return to the Highlands in disguise. Carried to Edinburgh, he was doomed to die, not for this

hostile descent on the country, but, without any trial, in accordance with the infamous sentence previously passed upon him. Like his father, he appears greater in his death than in his life. He bore with meekness the insults which were put upon him; spent his few remaining days in acts of kindness and the duties of religion; and showed how calmly a Christian could die, by going quietly to sleep a few hours before his execution.*

The prisons of Edinburgh were crowded with persons thrown into them for nonconformity. It was resolved to relieve the press, and make room for new-comers, by sending two hundred of them to Dunnottar Castle. The massive ruins of this celebrated fortress still remain to bear witness to its ancient strength. It stands on an insulated rock on the Kincardine coast, which rises a hundred and fifty feet out of the sea. Into a dark underground dungeon in this fortress, still shown as the "Whigs' vault," the Covenanters were thrust. Men and women were here huddled together, without regard to decency, and with scarcely enough of room to sit down. They had one small window looking out to the sea, and often must they have wearily scanned from it the waste of waters. After some days, forty of them were removed to a vault smaller and more miserable still. The only provision for admitting light and air into this horrid hole was a chink in the wall, but the wretched captives discovered that a current of fresh air came rushing through a crevice near the ground, and here they were accustomed to take their turn, lying flat upon the earth, to enjoy the luxury of first breathing it. Happily the lady of the governor came to visit the dungeons, and with a woman's pitying nature prevailed upon her husband to make a separation of the sexes, and reduce the number of prisoners in the smaller vault.

Still their condition was sufficiently miserable. They had no food, not even water, but what they paid for; and what was furnished them was frequently unwholesome. Several of them sickened and died. Twenty-five of them contrived to creep out of the window, and clamber along the rocks,

* Wodrow's History, vol. iv. Burnet's History, vol. ii. Macaulay, vol. ii.

seeking to escape from such a chamber of horrors; but fifteen of them were retaken, and punished for their attempt by having lighted matches placed between their fingers till the flesh was burned to the bone. In some cases inflammation and death ensued. They were offered their freedom if they would take the oath of allegiance and supremacy, but this they would not do; "they were tortured, not accepting deliverance." It was in the month of May they were sent to Dunnottar. Toward the end of July they were brought back to Edinburgh, and about a hundred of them, after being first branded with a hot iron, were put on board a vessel, to be carried to America as slaves. They had scarcely set sail till the fever broke out amongst them—the natural result of their long confinement and bad fare; sometimes three and four in a day were committed to the deep. The voyage lasted fifteen weeks, and before they reached the shore upwards of sixty of them had gone to the land "where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest." The remnant were fortunately declared by the magistrates of New Jersey to be freemen, and enjoyed on a foreign soil a happiness which they had never enjoyed at home.*

James VII. was a Papist, and the Papists in Scotland, like the Presbyterians, were a proscribed people. The penal laws against them had not been enforced for many long years; but the king, not satisfied with this, wished to be able to raise them to places of trust and power. He had felt the pulse of the English parliament, but its temper was such that he dissolved it. He next resolved to essay the ever-servile parliament of the north. To appear consistent, he resolved to stand forth as the advocate of liberty of conscience, and to extend a pardon to the Presbyterians, while he sought indulgence to the Papists. The Estates assembled on the 29th of April, and the Earl of Moray, who had pleased the king by apostatizing to Popery, appeared as Royal Commissioner, and laid before them a letter in which his Majesty said that he had sent down, to be passed by them, a full and ample indemnity for all crimes committed against his person and authority; and that while he thus

* Wodrow's History, vol. iv. pp. 321–31.

extended mercy to his enemies, he could not be forgetful of his innocent Roman Catholic subjects, who had ever been faithful to the government, and yet lay under many discouragements; and that therefore he recommended them to their special care.*

The parliament were staggered by this. An alarm had spread over the country that the Protestant religion was in danger: and in truth danger there was. The Church, though Prelatic, was yet Protestant; and the clergy in some cases preached against Popery, and in others reminded their diocesans of what was their duty as the representatives of the Ecclesiastical Estate.† The primate and Bishop Paterson, imbued with the principles of passive obedience, and feeling that they owed all to the king, were favourable to a repeal of the penal statutes; but the Archbishop of Glasgow and the Bishops of Galloway and Dunkeld opposed it. In their reply to the king, the Estates cautiously promised to take the subject into their consideration, and go as great a length as they could; and the Lords of the Articles framed more than one draft of a bill to be laid before the parliament; but in these so little was granted, that the Commissioner thought it better to abandon the subject altogether, and so the parliament was dissolved without anything being done. The prelates who had ventured to oppose the king paid for their presumption by being removed from their sees.‡

A.D. 1687. James was not a man to be baulked of his purpose, especially in matters of faith. What parliament had refused to do, he resolved to do himself, by virtue of his own royal prerogative. He abrogated all laws against Roman Catholics, allowed them the free and public exercise of their religion, and rendered them eligible to all places of trust; and, as a counterpart to this, he suspended by a series of proclamations all the sanguinary laws which had been made against Nonconformists, and allowed the Presbyterians to meet and serve God after their own way

* This letter will be found in Lord Somers's Tracts, vol. ii. p. 378.

† The clergy of the Diocese of Aberdeen sent a memorial of this kind to their bishop.

‡ Wodrow, vol. iv. Somers's Tracts, vol. ii. Burnet, vol. ii.

either in private houses or chapels, provided they did not preach disloyal doctrines, or meet for worship in the open air.

In these royal proclamations, emanating from a Popish king, we have the principles of that religious toleration which we now enjoy, and for which we would willingly die. But the men of those days justly suspected both the motive and design of the monarch. They remembered he was the member of an intolerant Church, and had for many years been a bloody persecutor himself. They believed that he tolerated the Presbyterians only to give some pretext for tolerating the Papists, and that the Papists would not merely be tolerated, but that they would soon officer the army, occupy the judgment-seat, crowd the senate, and overthrow the Church. The public mind was haunted by fears of Popery again coming in like a flood. Was not the king absolute? Had he not in many instances abrogated acts of parliament by a stroke of his pen, and might he not any day overthrow the whole legislation upon which Protestantism was built?

Though these sentiments pervaded the whole community, the more moderate Presbyterians, joyful in their deliverance, wrote a letter full of gratitude to the king, and began to erect meeting-houses for the Presbyterian worship. But the unswerving Cameronians scorned to acknowledge the act of grace. What title had James Stewart to hinder or allow them to preach the gospel? Was not their warrant from the King Jesus? Had they not disowned the whole Stewart race as perjured Covenant-breakers, and were they to accept of their deceitful favours now? Besides, did not the proclamations proceed on the principles of a toleration which they reprobated as sinful?* They continued their field conventicles, and defied the government. After the death of Cargill, Renwick had been revered as their leader; and this

* See the Testimony of Some Persecuted Presbyterian Ministers of the Gospel, unto the Covenanted Reformation of the Church of Scotland, and to the present expediency of continuing to preach the gospel in the fields, and against the present Antichristian toleration in its nature and design, given in to the ministers in Edinburgh, by Mr James Renwick, upon the 17th January 1688,—printed in the Appendix to the Cloud of Witnesses.

renowned preacher, after eluding the authorities for years, was seized in February 1688, and his name is written last on the roll of the Scottish martyrs.

As the dawning of a better day was now streaking the horizon, we shall pause in our narrative, and endeavour to give a more distinct embodiment to some of the circumstances which have been darkly seen in the disastrous night through which the Church has passed.

The change in the worship and government of the Church, which the Stewarts had introduced, and against which the people had rebelled, was not so great as might at first be supposed. When Charles II. set up Episcopacy, he forbade the presbyteries to meet till they should be reconstituted as bishops' courts; and for a short time no presbyteries met. When the bishops, however, entered upon their office, the presbyteries again began to assemble. But they now met by episcopal warrant, were presided over by a permanent moderator appointed by the ordinary, and, though still called presbyteries by the people, were generally spoken of simply as meetings by the clergy.* The odious name of Presbytery was as far as possible ignored in authoritative quarters; but old habits of speech could not be altogether got rid of. The kirk-sessions still continued to discharge their peculiar functions, superintending the poor and rebuking offenders, who appeared before the Episcopal as they had done before the Presbyterian congregations—clothed in sackcloth.† Synods were sometimes held, too, in which either the bishop in person, or some one specially appointed by him, presided. The

* Kirkton says, "It was a considerable time, even some years, before ever ministers were permitted to meet together, so much as for the exercise of their ministerial gifts; and when they first met, they were constituted a meeting for such and such effects by virtue of the bishop's commission, allowing the ministers of the precinct, and secluding the elders." (History, p. 141.) I have examined the Presbytery Records of Perth, and find, as Kirkton states, the meetings of presbytery, at the period, generally spoken of simply as meetings, the name of presbytery being studiously avoided.

† There are many Kirk-session Records in existence belonging to this period. Wodrow furnishes us with an Act of the Privy Council in 1684, empowering ministers to give in lists of persons qualified to be elders to their ordinaries, and authorizing letters of horning to be used against any such persons as should refuse the office; and also, with a warrant from the Bishop of Edinburgh to the minister of Ormiston to choose elders. See vol. iv. p. 178.

General Assembly never met. It was a court which the Stewarts had never loved, and from James downwards they had laboured to destroy it. Even Cromwell had found it troublesome, and while he tolerated the inferior courts as innocuous, he had put his iron foot upon it. Scotland had not seen a General Assembly since 1651, when Colonel Cotterel dispersed the theological conclave, as his master had, some years before, the parliament of England.

When a presentation to a vacant parish was issued, it was addressed no longer to the presbytery, but to the bishop; and the presentee was set apart to his work not by Presbyterian, but by Episcopal hands. Nor was the solemn ceremony performed, as before, in the parish church, in the sight of the people among whom the minister was to labour in spiritual things; but generally in the cathedral, with few spectators but deans and prebendaries. Candidates, however, for the holy office were prepared for their work in the old way. After a course of training at the university, they were taken upon trial by the presbytery, and, if found qualified, were admitted as expectants. From these expectants ministers were chosen. The ministerial work was unchanged, and appears to have been very similar to what it is in the present day. There were in general two sermons every Sabbath, and it was seldom that a manuscript was admitted to the pulpit.

The form of public worship was little altered. After the experiment of 1637, it was not thought wise to hazard the liturgy of Laud. No attempt was even made to press the Articles of Perth. The prayers were extemporaneous, and the Eucharist was administered to communicants sitting around a table, and not kneeling at an altar. Upon two things only the bishops, and even the presbyteries, appear to have insisted,—that the Lord's Prayer should be repeated during the service, and the doxology sung at the close of it.* The practice of congregations, however, does not appear to have been uniform. In some cases, the ministers compiled a kind of service for themselves. Gilbert Burnet, when

* In the privy censures, at this time common, one of the questions asked was, as to whether these things were attended to. See the Records of the Presbytery of Perth.

parson of Salton, and probably a few others, used the English Book of Common Prayer; but, in the great majority of instances no liturgy whatever was employed.* Neither were the prejudices of the people shocked by the sight of a surplice, the use of the cross in baptism, or the genuflexions of a priest with his face toward the altar. No religious anniversary was necessarily observed but that of the Restoration; but Christmas, Easter, and Whitsunday were kept by the Episcopalians.

In forming an estimate of the state of the Church at this time, it must be remembered that a considerable proportion of the clergy were still Presbyterian. In round numbers, there were nine hundred parishes in Scotland. Only between two and three hundred ministers were ejected; the others were allowed to continue in their parishes without any express recantation of their principles. When vacancies afterwards occurred, they were in some instances filled up by men of Episcopal opinions; but in other instances they were supplied by the Presbyterians to whom the indulgence was extended, so that the Presbyterian element must in this way have been maintained.† The whole of these men must of course have tacitly recognised the Episcopate; and, by taking the Test Oath, have abjured the most cherished principles of the Covenanting times; but still they were permitted to cling to the old Presbyterian faith, continue the old Presbyterian worship, and meet in their old Presbyterian Courts.

The re-introduction of the Episcopate was, of course, in itself a considerable change. The bishop constituted an

* See Life of Burnet prefixed to his History. See also Bishop Sage's Fundamental Charter. Bishop Russel's History of the Church, &c. &c. In the rabblings which followed the Revolution, it was a common thing to burn the prayer-books which were found in the Episcopal manses, so that the Episcopalians must have used these in private, if not in public.

† Kirkton says—"There were not many of the old ministers that suffered for their profession, and the whole number of them made not up the third part of the company that were witnesses for the Covenant and way of the Church of Scotland. It was indeed thought strange, that those who had been in arms for the Covenant, and preached the husband from the wife, and the father from the children, should have been so base in an hour of trial; but it was a time of great discoveries." (History, p. 203.)

order which, though not new in the Scottish Church, had always been disliked, and of late regarded as positively Anti-christian. But the Scotch bishops of this period were free of that pomp which has made them the subjects of envy, both in the Roman and the Anglican Church. They were indeed members both of the parliament and the Privy Council, and the primate took precedence of the chancellor; but their episcopal revenues were comparatively small. The combined income of all the bishoprics in Scotland did not exceed L.4000 sterling. The primacy is indeed said to have been worth L.1000, but Argyle yielded only L.130, and Dunblane L.120.* These sums, however, were equal in value to three times the same amount in the present day.

One should have imagined that when the nation was allowed its Calvinistic creed, and its ancient worship, it would not have been driven to rebellion by the changes in the ecclesiastical polity of the country to which we have referred. And, in truth, by far the greatest part of the country did succumb. The large district north of the Tay was little troubled with Covenanting scruples. Even the Lothians, the very focus of the rebellion in 1638, were comparatively tranquil in 1662. Seven or eight counties, lying along the south and west of Scotland, formed the battle-field of Presbytery. There every inch of ground was fiercely disputed with the Episcopate. Stirling and Fife had their stern adherents of the Covenant too; and a few stray Covenanters were to be found in every shire; but whenever we penetrate among the Celts of the north-west, or the Pictish population of the north-east, we find either utter indifference or virulent dislike of the Covenanting cause.†

The districts in which the Whigs were most numerous are identical with those where the Protesters and Remonstrants had previously most greatly flourished. The high principles which these men had cherished lived in their descendants,

* Kirkton's History, p. 130. Russel's History, vol. ii. p. 261. Bishop Sage speaks of the bishoprics being in all worth about L.6000 or L.7000 at the time of the Revolution. It is probable they had increased in value.

† Wodrow tells how the Whigs confined in Dunnottar were disliked by the people in the neighbourhood.

and led them to struggle to the death for doctrines which had been exalted in their eyes into the most essential truths of Christianity.

But there were many circumstances which contributed to the resistance offered by Scotland to the modified Episcopacy which the government had resolved to introduce. Ever since the days of Melville, bishops had been regarded as the spawn of Popery—the issue of the scarlet whore's fornications with the princes of the earth. The excitement of the Covenanting triumphs had deepened that belief; and, moreover, men could not all at once forget that in the Covenant they had solemnly sworn to abide by Presbytery, and extirpate every other form of faith. Their horror of Erastianism was equally great as of Episcopacy. Jesus Christ was King of Zion, and any civil magistrate who interfered with the government of the Church trenched upon His crown rights. Had bishops been recognised by a General Assembly, had the changes been brought about by the ecclesiastical courts, it had deprived them of one-half of their malignity. But had not the king intruded into the Holy Place? had he not put his hand upon the ark? had he not set up bishops on his own authority? had he not forbidden or allowed to preach men whose commission to preach was from above?

The sudden ejection of so many ministers was the fatal error of the government, and made the peaceful triumph of Episcopacy to be all but impossible. It is not in human nature, that men turned out of their homes and their livings should cherish the same loyal and peaceful sentiments as men fostered and protected by the law. Nor was it to be expected that the people should be indifferent to the fate of ministers whom they had hitherto loved and revered. It was to be expected that if the outed ministers preached, their old parishioners would flock to hear them; and that sermons preached on the hillside would not be so full of submission as sermons preached in the parish church.

The persecution begun against Nonconformity increased the bitterness already felt against the bishops and their curates. They were regarded as the cause of every fine that was exacted, and of every execution that took place. And

truly enough was done in this way to make Episcopacy be detested to the tenth generation. Upwards of five hundred were slain at Rullion Green, Drumclog, Bothwell Bridge, and Airsmoss. Probably about a hundred and fifty were executed by the sentence of the Justiciary or Circuit Courts; and at least as many more shot down by the military in the fields with no form of law at all.* The multitude who suffered imprisonment or exile no man can number. The fines which were extorted from the gentry and farmers amounted to upwards of L.300,000 sterling;† and that at a period when the whole revenue derived by government from the country did not exceed L.50,000 a year. Perhaps the license and extortions of the military were the greatest inflictions of all. These cruelties could not be perpetrated without exciting virulent animosities. Men could not see themselves ruined, their daughters insulted, their relatives hung, and still regard with complacency a Church polity under the broad

* It is very difficult to form a correct estimate of the numbers who lost their lives for their adherence to Presbytery. Sir George Mackenzie declares that not one was put to death solely for religion; and it is easy to understand how he makes out his point. Laws were made against the performance of the Presbyterian worship; and then the advocate argues that the victims of his cruelty were put to death for their violations of law, and not for their religion. De Foe says that upwards of 18,000 suffered for their religion in one way or other. He calculates that 1700 were banished as slaves; and 750 sent to remote districts of Scotland; that 800 were outlawed; 3600 imprisoned; 560 killed in battle; 7000 driven into voluntary exile; 400 killed by the soldiers; 360 by the hangman, &c. I have no hesitation in thinking these numbers exaggerated. The numbers who were imprisoned, fined, and made fugitive were undoubtedly very great. Wodrow gives us a proscription roll, in which there are nearly 2000 names. But I am inclined to think that the chroniclers of those days have preserved the names of most of those who suffered death, and that we have them now in Naphtali, the Cloud of Witnesses, Wodrow, &c. Religious chroniclers have ever been very careful to preserve the memory of the martyrs. The numbers I have hazarded to mention are considerably greater than the aggregate of all the names on record. If we except those who were in arms against the government at Rullion Green, Bothwell Bridge, or Airsmoss, we shall greatly reduce the numbers; for the majority of those who were sentenced to death were charged with rebellion, and no doubt most of them were guilty of it. But shall we blame them for doing battle against tyranny, and cease to pity them in their death?

† Wodrow, in his Preface to the Second Volume of his History, gives a list of fines, amounting to L.3,174,819, 18s. 8d. Scots; and he states that his list is very defective, a great many parishes being altogether omitted for want of information.

shadow of which those things were done. Being pricked, they bled; being hung, they died; being wronged, they sought their revenge.

At the Restoration the Presbyterians were divided into Resolutioners and Protesters; their common sufferings drew them together; but the Indulgence was no sooner offered by the government, and accepted by a number of the ministers, than they were divided once more into two parties. The majority appear to have exhibited moderation of sentiment, and anxiety for compromise; the minority were made more and more tenacious of their principles by the cruelties to which they were exposed. Their principles even assumed a fuller development, and at length resulted in the Queensferry, Sanquhar, and Apologetic Declarations. They disowned the Stewarts as a perjured race. They sought after a commonwealth governed by the Mosaic law. Their Presbyterian brethren who had accepted the Indulgence, or in any way recognised the government, they would have no communion with. They were to be regarded as men who having put their hand to the plough had turned back. They held the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling-block before the children of Israel. They were no better than the Nicolaitans, for whose sake the Church of Pergamos was rebuked. They were only fit to be spewed out of the mouth. The followers of Cameron, Cargill, and Renwick went still farther, and held they were entitled to meet force by force—to murder those who sought to murder them.

Yet these men were the true offspring of the Covenant. In a time of universal backsliding and defection they held fast by its distinctive principles; in the midst of tribulation, as in the midst of triumph, they maintained it was their sacred duty to extirpate Popery, Prelacy, and Sectarianism. When tormented and tortured, they never weakly cried out for toleration; on the contrary, they lifted up their voice against it. They boldly maintained that liberty of conscience was but a liberty of error; it was the putting a sword into a madman's hand, giving a cup of poison to a child, letting loose foxes with firebrands at their tails, ap-

pointing a city of refuge in men's hearts for the devil to flee to, proclaiming liberty to the wolves to come into Christ's fold and prey upon the lambs, a legalizing of soul-murder, for which damned souls in hell would accurse men upon earth.*

To every one who studies the documents of that period, it becomes obvious that the piety of these high-handed Covenanters was not the piety which would be esteemed most amiable in our day. But this is little more than to say that the virtues of peace are not the virtues of war. Their peculiar piety was the natural growth of the circumstances in which they were placed. The preachers harped upon the themes which divided them from the court and the Church, and the people brooded upon these till they acquired an undue ascendency in their minds. The very sufferings which they endured generated the idea that merit was thereby acquired, and that they stood above all others as the chosen people of God. With this feeling there were mingled those human passions which oppression always begets, and which gave to their fanaticism, in some instances, a dark and deadly hue. But we owe much to their stern struggles; and had their religion been of a milder kind, it is probable they would not have struggled so bravely and so long. In their darkest hours they never despaired, they hoped against hope, not so much from their knowledge of the intrigues that were going on at the Hague, as because their faith in Divine Providence was firm. Might not God, as of old, make the walls of Jericho to fall down at the blast of a ram's horn blown by a feeble priest?

The partiality for the Old Testament, which began immediately after the Reformation, still continued, and was very characteristic of all the Covenanters.† It gave a tone to their talk, which has frequently been made the subject of ridicule. It gave a sternness to their sentiments, which the

* See Testimony by Renwick, already referred to, printed at the end of the Cloud of Witnesses, p. 485. The figures here used are borrowed from it.

† I have had the curiosity to go over the Scripture references in a well-known pamphlet belonging to the century (1622), entitled: "Issachar's Ass braying under a double burden;" and I find that eighty-four of these are to the Old Testament, and fifteen to the new. A similar proportion holds in regard to almost all the religious writings and sayings of the period.

mild spirit of Christianity should have taught them to correct. The eloquence of their preachers had its own peculiar cast. Every subject which they handled they divided and subdivided into an interminable number of heads and particulars, lessons, applications, and improvements; but this was the fault of the age, and was common alike to Episcopal and Presbyterian divines. They were frequently homely, and sometimes coarse; but refinement of thought and language was not to be expected in that rude age from every rural pastor—much less from men who were chased from society and compelled to herd with outlaws among the hills. They must have had a power of touching the hearts of their hearers, and that is the end of oratory. "Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence Displayed," is a book which non-juring squires, not overburdened with religion, must have hugely enjoyed; it contains some things which are true, and others which are like the truth; but all in all it is a gross caricature of the men and the times it pretends to delineate.

For twenty-five years the Presbyterians had been a persecuted people in the land of their birth; but the day of their deliverance drew near. Had James been of the Protestant faith, and protected the English hierarchy as his brother had done, he would have been left to do his worst against the Scotch Presbyterians, and in a few years more they must have been exterminated. But his Romish faith alarmed both kingdoms; his dispensing with the Test Acts, in England as well as in Scotland, gave rise to the well-grounded suspicion that every office in the country would soon be in possession of the Papists; and his putting forth his hand on the English Church made divines, who had hitherto preached passive obedience, turn round and curse him to his face. William, Prince of Orange, who had married the king's eldest daughter, had long watched the state of affairs in our island; he had long been ambitious of adding to the dignity of Stadtholder of Holland the lustre of three crowns. The malcontents on both sides of the Tweed had been in communication with him. It was evident that the country was ripe for a revolution. With a well-

appointed fleet, attended with transports having fourteen thousand troops on board, he set sail from the Dutch shores, and on the 5th of November 1688 landed at Torbay. Six weeks afterwards James was a fugitive, and the country was free.

CHAPTER VII.

So soon as it was known in Scotland that William of Orange had landed at Torbay; that he was slowly advancing toward London; that the English nobility were flocking to him; that the royal army was deserting to him; that the bewildered James had attempted to flee the country, the people began to show how ready they were to concur with the prince in shaking off the burdens under which they had groaned. A few days after the landing at Torbay, the Scotch Privy Council issued an order forbidding any one to receive or circulate the prince's Declaration; but it nevertheless found its way into the country, and was publicly proclaimed by the populace at Glasgow, Ayr, Irvine, and several other burghs in the west. It alluded to the sufferings to which the people had been subjected because of their religion; it declared that the object of the expedition was to free the country of Popery and arbitrary power; but it gave no pledge for the re-establishment of Presbytery.*

The students in Glasgow University showed the spirit which possessed them by burning the effigy of the Pope, in company with those of the Archbishops of Glasgow and St Andrews.†

Toward the middle of December, Edinburgh began to show a disposition to riot. A chapel had been fitted up in Holyrood House for the Popish worship, and this was an abomination not to be suffered. The mob gathered, and, assisted by the city train-bands, forced the palace, killed a number of the soldiers who defended it, and soon rifled the

* Wodrow's History, vol. iv. pp. 470–72.

† Ibid. p. 472.

shrine which had excited their rage. They carried the images in triumphal procession through the streets, and then solemnly burned them. Not satisfied with this, they proceeded to search the houses of the Roman Catholics in the city, and to carry off their books, beads, and crucifixes, that they might commit them to the flames. Thieves followed in the wake of the crowd, and while the students and apprentices were showing their zeal for Protestantism, they were exhibiting their love for plunder, by pillaging every house they could manage to enter.*

The Earl of Perth was especially obnoxious to the crowd. Bishop Burnet bears witness that he was a man of kindly dispositions; but he had sacrificed his good dispositions and his early faith to his inordinate ambition. He had received the chancellorship as the reward of his apostacy, and was deeply implicated in all the cruelties of the reign which was now coming to a close. The mob pulled down a picture of him which was suspended at the Canongate; offered a mock reward of L.400 for his seizure; and he was glad to save himself by flight. He was laid hold of at Kirkcaldy disguised in the dress of a sailor, roughly handled and sadly frightened by the rabble, and lodged in the Castle of Stirling, from which he was afterwards allowed to retire to France.

Meanwhile there were wild rumours afloat of an army of Irish Papists that had landed, or was about to land, on the coast of Galloway. Some said it was already at Kirkcudbright, and had burned it. These reports were probably the result of excitement and of fear, rather than of design. In such times rumours are ever rife. People began to dread a massacre. The Council had dissolved. The military had been marched into England. There was a dissolution of all authority. The peasantry of the western counties began to collect in large crowds, armed with such weapons as they could procure, and to take the law into their own hands. Their wrath vented itself on the unhappy curates. They resolved to purge the temple of them, without waiting for the decision of the legislature. They began their work upon Christmas, which seems to have been thought an

* Wodrow's History, vol. iv.

appropriate day. In some cases, the curates saved themselves from insult by timely flight. In other cases, they were laid hold of by the rabble, carried about in mock procession, had their gowns torn over their heads, their Prayer-Books burned before their eyes, and then were told to be off, and never to show themselves in the parish again. When done with the minister, the mob frequently entered the manse, tumbled the furniture out at the windows, marched the inmates to the door, took possession of the keys; and on next Sunday a preacher, who had till lately been skulking among the hills, was found in the pulpit thundering against persecuting prelatists. These rabblings went on for two or three months; every now and then an instance was occurring, till almost every parish in the south and west was cleared of its Episcopal incumbent. Upwards of two hundred clergymen were thus rabbled out of their manses, their parishes, and their livings.*

The wives and families of these men shared in their misfortunes. Many must have been rendered homeless; some reduced to absolute beggary; and we read with pity of individuals who were obliged to throw themselves on the charity of their Presbyterian enemies.† In the accounts of the kirk-sessions of that period, entries are to be found of a few pence given "to a poor curate's wife."‡ Still no life was lost. The only martyrdom these men underwent was a little rough usage from an ignorant rabble, and the loss of their livings. And it must be remembered that in the districts of the country where these things happened the curates occupied

* Somers's Tracts, coll. iii. vol. iv. p. 133—Case of the Episcopal Clergy in Scotland truly represented. Case of the Afflicted Clergy, &c. Burnet's History, vol. ii. p. 444.

† In the petition which they gave in to the parliament they said, "They were generally reduced to great necessities, and many of them, with numerous families, were at the point of starving." See Somers's Tracts, coll. iii. vol. iv. p. 141.

‡ In the accounts of the kirk-session of Crieff, there are the following entries:—

1703. July 28. To Mr Irvine, an Episcopal minister,	L.1	0	0	Scots.
1704. Jan. 23. To a curate's wife, ...	0	5	0	„
1709. July 12. To Mr Theodore Humphrey, an Episcopal minister in Shetland, recommended by the Assembly, ...	1	4	0	„
1712. July 19. To Mr Park, Episcopal minister, .	0	18	0	„

their pulpits in opposition to the will of the people, and enjoyed stipends of which others had been tyrannically deprived. They had no root in the soil; they were aliens in their own parishes. What is more, they were suspected of having abetted the persecution of those who preferred their old Presbyterian ministers to them. The violence of revolution is generally proportionate to the evils which lead to it. It is thus the excesses of the French revolution are excused. For twenty-five long years the Presbyterians had been cruelly oppressed; and yet, when times of revolution came, they did not rise and murder their oppressors. Even the rabblings were conducted chiefly by the Cameronians and the lowest of the people, and many of the Presbyterians strongly condemned them.*

A.D. 1689. William of Orange was not long at St James's till he called together the Scottish noblemen who happened to be in London, to ask their counsel in regard to the affairs of their country. They met upon the 8th of January, under the presidency of the Duke of Hamilton, and agreed to beg the prince to take upon him the civil and military administration of the kingdom, and to call a Convention of the Estates at Edinburgh on the 14th of March. To this William readily gave his consent.

So soon as William set his foot upon English soil, the Scottish clergy became uneasy about their Church. Early in December the bishops met, and commissioned Dr Rose, the Bishop of Edinburgh, to proceed to London and watch the progress of affairs. When the bishop was on his way, he learned that King James had fled from Rochester to France, which so greatly perplexed him that he had some thoughts of returning home. When he reached London, he waited upon the Archbishop of Canterbury; but Sancroft could only tell him that everything was very dark, and that no one could yet clearly see light. He waited upon Stillingfleet, but Stillingfleet was cross; and when Rose afterwards

* See Rule's Vindication, and the Preface to Sage's Fundamental Charter. The Cameronians themselves got somewhat ashamed of their rabbling Reformation work, and resolved, instead of it, to send a threatening letter to each curate, which they thought would have the effect of frightening him out of his parish. See Faithful Contendings Displayed, pp. 375, 376.

told this to the primate, the primate smiled, and said that "St Asaph was a good man, but an angry man." He next tried Dr Burnet, who was well known to have influence at court; but Burnet told him he did not meddle with Scotch affairs. The bishop saw there was nothing for it but to hang on about London, and see what turn affairs would take.

After long debate, the English Convention declared that James had abdicated the throne, and called William and Mary to fill it. The Scotch bishop now thought it was high time to return home, more especially as a Convention of the Scotch Estates had been called to decide upon the same great question. He requested the Bishop of London to introduce him at court, in order that he might get a passport for Scotland. Dr Compton suggested that this might be a proper time to beg William to extend his protection to the clergy who were being rabbled out of their parishes, and offered to introduce him and Sir George Mackenzie for that purpose. When Dr Rose and Sir George Mackenzie met the Bishop of London in one of the anterooms of Whitehall, they asked if their purpose would not be served better if the Scotch Episcopal nobles and gentry in London waited upon the prince in a body. The bishop entered into the idea, and said he would go and learn what were the feelings of the king.

Dr Compton returned after an absence of half an hour, and said that King William would not admit more than two at one time, of either Episcopalians or Presbyterians, to speak with him upon Church affairs, lest it should excite jealousy. "My Lord," said Compton, addressing himself to Rose, "you see that the king, having thrown himself upon the water, must keep himself swimming with one hand—the Presbyterians having joined him closely, and offered to support him; and therefore he cannot cast them off, unless he could see how otherwise he could be served. And the king bids me tell you, that he now knows the state of Scotland much better than he did when he was in Holland; for while there he was made believe that Scotland generally all over was Presbyterian, but now he sees that the great body of the nobility and gentry are for Episcopacy, and it is the trading and inferior sort that are for Presbytery. Where-

fore he bids me tell you, that if you will undertake to serve him to the purpose that he is here served in England, he will take you by the hand, support the Church and your order, and throw off the Presbyterians." To this Dr Rose answered, that his instructions did not extend so far, and that, as for himself, he would rather abandon all than renounce his allegiance to James. "In these circumstances," said Compton, "the king must be excused for standing by the Presbyterians."

While this conversation was going on, William passed through the room in which they were standing on his way out, and the opportunity for an interview that day was lost. Next day, however, Compton presented the Bishop of Edinburgh to his Majesty. William advanced a few steps, and said, "My Lord, are you going to Scotland?" "Yes, sir," said Rose, "if you have any commands for me." "Then," replied William, "I hope you will be kind to me, and follow the example of England." The bishop did not well know how to answer, without entangling himself in his talk. "Sir," he said, "I will serve you so far as law, reason, or conscience shall allow me." William turned round, and went back to his courtiers.*

Though Burnet told the Bishop of Edinburgh that he did not meddle in Scotch affairs, he introduced to William the Dean of Glasgow, who had come up to London on a similar errand. The prince told the dean that he would do what he could to maintain their order, in the event of their giving their support to his government; but if they opposed that, or if the parliament of the country, by a great majority, determined for Presbytery, he would not make war for them, though he would do all in his power to secure them toleration, so long as they lived peaceably. The prince further asked Burnet to communicate this to some of the bishops who had written him, eagerly asking what was to be done.†

While these efforts were being made by the Episcopalians,

* The letter in which Dr Rose describes his adventures is to be found in the Appendix to Keith's Catalogue of the Scottish Bishops. I see no reason to doubt either its genuineness or general truthfulness.

† Burnet's History, vol. iii. p. 25.

the Presbyterians had a powerful friend at court in WILLIAM CARSTARES, whom we have already seen manfully enduring the torture of the thumbscrews, and making terms with his tormentors as to the secrets he was to tell. His round face, expressive eyes, and strongly marked mouth, as still seen in his portrait, indicate a man of both strong intellect and kindly feelings. He had been a devoted Whig, a restless intriguer, and a fast friend of the Presbyterians. He had gained, when an exile in Holland, the confidence of William of Orange, and he retained it when William of Orange became King of England. It was few with whom the silent Dutchman took counsel, but Carstares was one of these. He was appointed chaplain to their Majesties for Scotland; for he was a Presbyterian minister, and the Presbyterian Church presented no higher dignity. But the chaplain had such influence, that he was nicknamed the Cardinal. Haughty nobles approached him respectfully to solicit favours. He possessed more real power than the first ministers of state. The secret of his influence was, that he was a stickler for the prerogative which William wished to preserve, and that he had been tried and found trusty. "I have known Carstares long," said William; "I have known him well, and I know him to be an honest man." He now had an opportunity of serving his brethren, and he did it most effectually. He represented to the king that the Episcopalians as a body were hostile to his government; that their doctrines of divine right and passive obedience would prevent them from throwing off their allegiance to James; and, besides, that they formed but a small fraction of the nation: that the Presbyterians, on the other hand, constituted the great bulk of the people, and were to a man hearty in his cause.*

What Carstares said in regard to the Episcopalians was true. They clung to the exiled dynasty with desperate tenacity. James had taught the Anglican divines the folly of preaching passive obedience, by calling upon them to practise it with their dignities and revenues in danger; but the Scottish clergy had got no such lesson. The Anglican divines, moreover, knew, that if deprived of the support of

* M'Cormick's Life of Carstares, p. 39.

the throne they could fall back upon the nation; while their brethren in the north knew that the royal favour was their breath of life, and that if deprived of it they must perish. The English bishops had such a dread of James's Popery, that the great majority of them welcomed the prince. The Scotch bishops had a greater dread of William's Presbyterianism than of James's Popery, and resolved to hold fast by their ancient allegiance. When the prince's fleet, on its first sailing from the Dutch coast, was driven back by a storm, they sent an address of congratulation to the king, wishing that he might soon have the necks of his enemies. When William took possession of Whitehall, deserted by its former tenant, not one of them welcomed his coming. When the Scottish Convention met, they unanimously opposed the forfeiture of the crown; and for long years afterwards they religiously adhered to their political creed. While we acknowledge their consistency, we do not wrong them by saying that they were greatly helped to it by the knowledge that their destiny and that of the Stewarts was bound up together.

William of Orange was a Calvinist. If he believed any one religious dogma firmer than another, it was predestination. What fatalism was to Mahomet, what his star was to Napoleon, predestination was to William. As Stadtholder of Holland he was, moreover, the head of a Presbyterian Church. If, however, he was a Presbyterian in Holland, he was an Episcopalian in England. He laughed at the idea of any form of polity possessing a divine right, and seldom let religious scruples of any kind come in the way of his statesmanship. But though easy in most religious matters, he was resolute in extending religious toleration to all.

It is difficult to discover what were his notions in regard to Scotch ecclesiastical affairs. It was no easy matter to penetrate his reserve in regard to anything, and more especially in regard to a subject so ticklish as this. It seems pretty certain, however, that he was at first inclined to use his influence for the preservation of the hierarchy. The English bishops were eager for this. Even such Low Churchmen as Burnet argued for it. Moreover, the hierarchy

existed; it was based upon many acts of parliament; and his mission was not to destroy the legal institutions of the country, but to uphold them. Then there was a fascination in the idea of a religious uniformity over the length and breadth of the island; it was a fascination which had carried away James VI., which had carried away the Covenanters, and which had its influence upon the less excitable mind of William. But William insisted upon being satisfied on two points, before he would pledge himself to Episcopacy—that the Episcopal clergy would support his government, and that the Episcopal Church would not be opposed by the bulk of the people. In regard to the first, he was soon convinced that the Episcopal clergy would not renounce their allegiance to James; and as conflicting testimonies were given him in regard to the second, he wisely resolved to leave the whole matter in the hands of the Convention about to assemble, as the best representative of the feelings of the nation.

There were legal obstacles in the way of the Convention being a fair exponent of the wishes of the people. According to law, no peer, no baron, no burgess, could sit in the meeting of the Estates without taking the Test, and no Presbyterian, no patriot could do so. According to law, the election of representative burgesses was vested in town councils; and in those days, no one was admitted within the sacred precincts of these municipal corporations till he had renounced the Covenants, acknowledged the king's supremacy in ecclesiastical affairs, and burdened his conscience with other oaths of a similar kind. These conclaves of abject Episcopalians, who had been ready to swear everything, would, if left to themselves, have sent to the Convention men as abject as themselves. William took it upon him to dispense with the obnoxious oaths, and to require the members for the burghs to be chosen by a poll of the whole inhabitants. Of course, he was twitted by the Tories for annulling the laws of the realm upon his own authority—the crime that had driven James from the throne. But how else could the representatives of the nation find their way into the parliament-house, but by the removal of the acts which the Stewarts had piled up at the door? How

could the people speak out till the gags were removed which the Stewarts had put into their mouths? Had no one been allowed to take his seat in the meeting of Estates, without first solemnly swearing that he would never attempt any alteration in the government; that he regarded even petitioning for redress to be a crime; that he acknowledged James to be the head of the Church, and the lord of his conscience,—what reform, not to say revolution, could be hoped from such a body? Things must have remained eternally the same, or men must have sworn one day to perjure themselves the next.

On the 14th of March the Convention met. Nine prelates took their places as the representatives of the Spiritual Estate. Forty-two peers, forty-nine members for counties, and fifty representatives of burghs made up the assemblage. The Bishop of Edinburgh opened the deliberations with prayer, and had the courage to supplicate that God would restore King James. The first trial of strength was the election of a president. The Tories put forward the Duke of Athole; the Whigs, the Duke of Hamilton. Hamilton was carried by a majority of forty, which clearly indicated the course affairs were to take. About twenty of the minority now deserted the cause of the falling throne, as rats abandon a falling house.

On the 16th, the Earl of Leven presented a letter from the Prince of Orange, in which his Highness expressed his anxiety that they would settle the religion and liberties of the nation upon lasting foundations, with a reference to the public good and the inclinations of the people; but he made no more distinct allusion to the disputes between the Episcopalians and Presbyterians. The Estates agreed to send him a respectful and thankful reply.* On the same day a letter was produced and read from the fugitive James, offering a pardon to those who should return to their duty before the end of the month, and denouncing the doom of traitors against all others. No one was bold enough to propose that this epistle should be gratefully acknowledged.†

* These letters will be found in Tarbet's Collection of the Acts of the Scotch Parliaments.

† Life of James II., pp. 287, 288.

Meanwhile there were circumstances which caused great uneasiness both to the citizens of Edinburgh and the members of the Convention. The Duke of Gordon, a Papist, held the castle, and though summoned by the Convention to surrender, declined; and it was dreaded that a few discharges of his artillery might bring the city tumbling about their ears. Moreover, Graham of Claverhouse, now Viscount Dundee, had come from London to attend the meeting of Estates, and it was whispered that his old troopers were gathering around him. But the danger and the dread were not all on one side. Seven or eight hundred of the westland Whigs, having effectually rabbled the Episcopal clergy at home, had come up to Edinburgh to watch the progress of affairs in the Convention, and be ready to defend the good cause, if need were. Some had come out of their own zeal, others had obeyed the summons of their feudal lords. They sauntered in bands about the streets, crowded about the Parliament-house door, and hooted and hustled the bishops as they entered.* The Viscount Dundee and Sir George Mackenzie complained to the Estates that their lives were in danger; and so deeply hated were they as bloody and deceitful men, that there can be little doubt there was cause for their fear. The Convention refused them its protection, and that same afternoon Dundee was seen clambering up the rocks of the Castle Hill, talking with Gordon, and then throwing himself upon his steed, and riding rapidly along the Stirling road, followed by some fifty of his dragoons. This news threw the Estates into alarm; the westland Covenanters were called together by tuck of drum, entrusted to the command of the Earl of Leven, and employed to keep ward upon the Convention till they were relieved by the arrival of some Scotch regiments under the command of General Mackay.†

The business of the Convention was yet to be done. A

* See Bishop Sage's Preface to the Fundamental Charter of Presbytery. Faithful Contendings Displayed, &c.

† There is considerable dubiety as to the exact time when the westland Whigs were recognised by the Convention as their guard. It is certain that when they were dismissed, the Earl of Leven, as their colonel, was thanked for their services.

committee was preparing its acts. At length the important resolution, decisive of the fate of the kingdom, prepared by eight peers, eight barons, and eight burgesses, was laid before the Estates. It declared that King James VII. was a Papist; that he had entered upon his regal office without taking the Coronation Oath; that he had violated the fundamental laws of the kingdom; and THEREFORE, that he had forfeited his right to the crown, and that the throne was become vacant. Upon the back of this there was another resolution taken—that William and Mary, King and Queen of England, France, and Ireland, should be declared King and Queen of Scotland. Only nine members, of whom seven were bishops, opposed these resolutions. At the close of the sederunt at which they were agreed upon, when one of the bishops, according to custom, was about to engage in prayer, a baron warned him that if he now prayed for James as king it would be regarded as treason. The bishop took the hint, and discreetly adjourned the meeting with the Lord's Prayer.*

The Convention at Edinburgh, following the example of the Convention at Westminster, embodied the resolutions regarding the vacancy of the throne, and the calling of William and Mary to fill it, in a Claim of Right. In this renowned document they set forth the violations of the law which had been perpetrated during the two previous reigns, the grievances under which the people had laboured, and the rights which they conceived to belong to them; and it was to be understood that the crown was given only on the condition of the principles of government contained in this Claim being recognised. One of the declarations of this document was,—"That Prelacy and the superiority of any office in the Church above Presbyters is, and hath been, a great and unsupportable grievance and trouble to this nation, and contrary to the inclination of the generality of the people, ever since the Reformation (they having reformed from Popery by Presbyters), and therefore ought to be abolished."

William was anxious that the Convention itself should settle the vexed question of the nation's ecclesiastical polity,

* Somers's Tracts, vol. ii. p. 389.

and therefore it only fulfilled his wishes when it did so. It was the best exponent of the people's desires, and William was resolved that the Church established by law should be the Church of the people. Moreover, by leaving the decision of the controversy with the Scotch Convention, he was saved from giving offence to the English Church. Had he taken any direct or active part in casting out bishops in the north, bishops in the south might have fancied their craft in danger, and have thought again of the king across the water. But Scotland had decided the matter for itself, and the establishment of Presbytery was made a condition of his getting the crown. If he took the crown he must take Presbytery with it. William was not sorry that such an obligation was imposed on him.

The Convention claimed the removal of Episcopacy on the low, but practical, and very sensible ground, that it was contrary to the general inclinations of the people. It was not affirmed that Episcopacy was sinful; it was not affirmed that Presbytery was apostolic; divine right was neither denied to the one nor claimed for the other; it was enough for the settlement of the Scotch Church that the Scotch people hated prelates and loved presbyters. Yet this fact, though not denied in the Convention, was denied out of it.

The Episcopalians argued that Episcopacy had been set up and confirmed, all but unanimously, in many parliaments, in which were the representatives of all Estates. They stated that the Test Oath had been taken, with few exceptions, by all the nobility, by all the gentry, by the members of every municipality, of every learned profession, yea, of every craft, and that in the Test Oath Presbyterian and Covenanting principles were abjured. They pointed to the fact that all the clergy were Episcopal, all the members of the College of Justice, all the professors in all the universities. They alleged that, when King James gave a full toleration to all, very few had taken advantage of it, so as to separate from the established worship; that in the vast country north of the Tay, there were not more than three or four Presbyterian meeting-houses; that in several of the central, eastern, and southern counties, scarcely a Presby-

terian was to be found; and, in fine, that not a tenth of the entire population cared for Presbytery.

The Presbyterians, on the other hand, maintained that what parliament had done when it was in vassalage it undid the moment it was free. They argued that the fact of the nobles, the barons, the burgesses, the members of every learned profession, and of every humble craft, having taken the Test, proved only that there are thousands who will rather swear anything than suffer the loss of all things; but that the conduct of these same men afterwards manifested how little their oath was the expression of their opinion. They affirmed that few meeting-houses had been erected during the short and uncertain toleration, because the majority of the people, by twenty-five years of hanging and shooting, had been brought to a sullen outward compliance with Episcopacy; and, besides, that many dreaded taking advantage of a toleration which was contrary to law. They said that such a pressure had been laid upon the country during the two past reigns, that it was impossible to judge of its feelings till that pressure was removed; but that it no sooner was removed than almost every county and every town declared for Presbytery by the choice of its representatives; that the whole south and west, taking law into their own hand, had ejected the Episcopal incumbents, and that the rest of the country, though not so outrageously zealous, would welcome back their Presbyterian ministers as gladly as Galloway and Ayr. They affirmed, in short, that of thirty-four counties, there were seventeen so entirely Presbyterian that not one Episcopalian in fifty was to be found; and that in the other seventeen, there were two Presbyterians for one who was inclined to Episcopacy.*

When the Claim of Right had been agreed upon, the Earl of Argyle, Sir John Dalrymple, and Sir James Montgomery were despatched to London to make a formal tender of the crown to William and Mary. On the 11th of May the ceremony took place in the banqueting-house at Whitehall. The

* Sage's Fundamental Charter, pp. 255–326. Rule's Vindication. Bishop Russel's History, &c. I suppose a stewartry—probably that of Strathearn—is reckoned to make up the thirty-four counties here alluded to.

Earl of Argyle read the Coronation Oath, clause by clause, and the royal couple, with their hands lifted up to heaven, repeated the words after him. The last clause makes the king swear, that "he shall root out all heretics and enemies to the true worship of God, that shall be convicted by the true Kirk of God of the foresaid crimes." At this clause William paused, and said, "I will not lay myself under any obligation to be a persecutor." The Commissioners declared that they did not consider that to be implied in the oath, and, upon this understanding, William took it. It is certainly difficult to see how such a negative sense as that assigned by the Commissioners can be attached to the language of the oath; but William had done enough to exonerate his conscience, and to exhibit his principles. It was a good omen for the future that such sentiments had at length mounted the British throne.

The Cameronians were not unconcerned spectators of what was passing in the country. A general meeting of their Societies was held at Lesmahagow to renew the Covenants, for which they had previously prepared themselves by a day of fasting. On Saturday, the 2d of March, they assembled in the parish church, but the crowd was so great that no building could contain them. A tent was therefore set up in the fields, and the preacher dilated upon the defections the land had been guilty of, and how they had forsaken the Covenants, and turned away from following the Lord, till night put a stop to him. On the next day, being Sabbath, they met on Borland Hill. First one minister and then another preached to the multitude. This being done, penitents were allowed to make a confession of their sins. One man stood up, and with tears confessed that he had been guilty of hearing a curate preach; another, that he had paid cess; another, that he had taken the Oath of Abjuration; another, that he had, for a time, been led away by the impostor Gibb; another, that he had been guilty of uncleanness or theft. The preacher, in the presence of the people, pointed out to them the heinousness of their respective sins.

Then came the special and most solemn works of the day.

A document containing an acknowledgment of sins and engagements to duties was read. Then the National Covenant and the Solemn League and Covenant were read; but in both the word "king" was expunged, and "civil magistrate" substituted in its place. The ministers debarred all from swearing who had not made conscience of mourning for all the breaches of which they had been guilty; and then all the congregation, with hands lifted up to heaven, entered anew into covenant with God.*

The proceedings of the Convention, though hailed with general delight by the Presbyterian population, did not satisfy these stern Covenanters. When the Convention first met they laid before it a petition, which, strangely enough, took the form of a litany. "We conjure your honours," said they, "to hearken to us—

"By all the formerly felt, presently seen, and for the future feared effects of Popery and tyranny:

"By the cry of the blood of our murdered brethren:

"By the sufferings of the banished freeborn subjects of this realm, now groaning in servitude:

"By the miseries that many thousands forfeited, disinherited, harassed, and wasted houses and families, have been reduced to:

"By all the sufferings of a faithful people for adhering to the ancient covenanted establishment of religion and liberty:

"And by all the arguments of justice, necessity, and mercy, that ever could join together to begin communication among men of wisdom, piety, and virtue:"

By these things they prayed that William should be made king, on condition that he professed and promised to preserve pure religion and the covenanted work of Reformation.† But they soon began to discover that William was not a man likely to take the Covenant himself, or to force others to take it. Did he not support black Prelacy in England, and did he not purpose at least to tolerate it in Scotland? Would it not be a sinful compliance to give their allegiance to such a latitudinarian king?

* Faithful Contendings Displayed, pp. 380–82.

† De Foe's Memoirs of the Church of Scotland. Crookshank's History, &c.

An opportunity soon occurred of testing their dispositions. The Highland clans were mustering under the Viscount Dundee; there were rumours of an invasion of Irish, and the government wished to raise a force sufficient for the defence of the kingdom. William Cleland, who had fought with distinguished bravery at Bothwell, and was one of the few men whom Claverhouse feared, made an offer to the Estates to raise a regiment among the Cameronians, under the colonelcy of the Earl of Angus, and the offer was accepted. The matter was soon mooted abroad among the Societies, who had already a kind of military organization. The good wishes of Shields, one of their preachers, were secured, and a general meeting called to determine how they should act.

Upon the 29th of April they met in the Kirk of Douglas. When the grave question of enlistment was propounded, it was maintained, on the one side, that for them to have a regiment in pay would be a sinful association, seeing there were in the army many malignants, men of blood, murderers of their brethren, with whom their officers behoved to sit in councils of war; and that as to Mackay, the commander-in-chief, they knew not "who he was, nor what he was for." It was maintained, on the other hand, that it was not a sinful but a necessitous association, in such times of danger; and that, though there were wicked men in the councils of war, their officers might do them good. Debate ran high, and the meeting was a scene of wild confusion. At length the question was put to the vote, Whether or not it would be a sinful association for them to raise a regiment, while there were in the army many officers, malignant and bloody men, and all under one general? The majority determined that it would be a sinful association; and so the hope of raising a regiment among such men seemed clean gone.

There were many, however, who thought that they were not doing their duty in holding back when religion and reformation were in jeopardy. Shields assisted them to this conclusion, by preaching to them from Judges v. 23—"Curse ye Meroz; curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof;

because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty." Other meetings were held, and conditions drawn up, under which it was thought they might without sin accept military service. It was proposed that every officer and every soldier admitted into the regiment should own and adhere to the Covenants and work of reformation against Popery, Prelacy, Erastianism, sectarianism, and arbitrary government; that they should be at liberty to impeach all in State, Church, or army who had oppressed them; and that, till all such notorious criminals were purged from the ranks, they should be kept as remote from them as might consist with the effectual management of the war; that they should not be asked to go out in promiscuous detachments, nor be mixed in encampments with such men. It was farther proposed that they should have the choice of their own officers; the choice of their own minister; that there should be an elder in every company; that, when on guard, they might perform the worship of God publicly; that, when off guard, they might have family worship regularly; that a day should be set apart every week for fellowship in prayer and Christian conference; another day for their minister to preach and catechize; and that there should be military laws to restrain all profane talk, all impurity, all drunkenness, and all drinking of healths.

When these proposals were shown to Cleland, he said it was quite inconsistent with military discipline for such a contract to be made between men and their officers. This declaration gave rise to fresh squabbles and debates. It was now the middle of May, and Cleland, much annoyed, intimated that he must report that he had failed in his promise to raise a regiment. But the men were already assembled; they were actually drawn up in companies; they only waited for terms which they thought they could in conscience accept. Another effort was made. A short paper was prepared for them, containing a declaration that they engaged in the service to resist Popery, Prelacy, and arbitrary power, and to recover and establish the work of reformation. Cleland rode from company to company and read this paper, and company after

company agreed to enlist upon its terms.* Such was the origin of the Cameronian regiment. Its first lieutenant-colonel was Cleland; its first chaplain was Shields. Its courage was first tried at Dunkeld, where these eight hundred Covenanted warriors rolled back the tide of Celtic invasion; and since then, undegenerate though changed, it has won trophies in every quarter of the world.†

When the Convention resolved to offer the crown to William and Mary, they published a proclamation forbidding any one to acknowledge James longer as king, and ordering prayers to be made in all the churches of the kingdom for the new sovereigns. Every minister was required to read this document from the pulpit, and to mould his devotions according to it, under pain of being deprived of his benefice. Many of the Episcopalians refused to do so. The recusants were brought before the Council, and a considerable number were ejected from their parishes. Their friends loudly complained of the harshness with which they were used. It was said that several of the clergy had not received copies of the proclamation till the morning of the Sabbath on which they were required to read it, and had no time to make up their minds on so weighty a matter as the transference of their allegiance. It was argued that though the crown was at that time offered to William and Mary, they had not yet accepted of it, and that, till the transaction was complete, ministers might be excused from mentioning them in their prayers. It was told that many of the Presbyterian ministers had taken no notice of the proclamation, and yet not a hair of their head was touched.‡ The Earl of Crawford was especially blamed for his diligence in hauling unhappy recusants before the Council. The earl, on the other hand, declared that his procedure had been particularly mild and merciful; in fact, that such was his tenderness that an alarm was spread that Episcopacy was to be reintroduced; that from first to last he had deserted the diet against thirty-three

* Faithful Contendings Displayed, pp. 393–404.

† Its first defection was card-playing, on which subject a pastoral letter was addressed by the Societies to the regiment. See Faithful Contendings.

‡ Case of the Afflicted Clergy, &c.

ministers, although proof might have been had of their guilt, but that it was hard that men who refused to own the king's authority should continue to enjoy their benefices; and that one man, on whose account he had been blamed, not only prayed openly for King James, but that the Lord would put a hook in the nose of the usurper William.*

The country had now a king, and might have a parliament. With a view to this, William appointed the Duke of Hamilton his Royal Commissioner. Hamilton's high rank and Whig principles entitled him to the dignity, but he had the middle views and vacillating policy which seemed to be hereditary in his family, and during his viceroyalty he failed to satisfy either others or himself. He was jealous of those associated with him, was perpetually complaining of Lord Crawford and others receiving the honours which were due to him, and was suspected of not being greatly grieved when matters went badly in the parliament.† As the kingdom had no chancellor, the Earl of Crawford was appointed to preside in the parliament when it met. He was a staunch Presbyterian, and a well-meaning man; but his poverty and puritanism made him the butt of the keenest satire of the Prelatists. Lord Melville, a man of moderate abilities and consistent Presbyterian principles, and who had endured exile for their sake, was made Secretary of State. Lord Stair, perhaps the greatest lawyer whom Scotland has produced, was made President of the Session, and his son, Sir John Dalrymple, one of the ablest debaters of his day, was created Lord Advocate; but both father and son had been involved in the crimes of the preceding reigns; and many, who deemed themselves free from such a blemish, grudged their promotion. For every person who received an office, ten were disappointed, and believed their merits overlooked; for the country was full of politicians, every one of whom thought he had saved the State.

The Estates assembled at Edinburgh on the 5th of June. Though the Episcopal Church still existed, no bishops came

* See Letters from Lord Crawford to Lord Melville, dated 12th October, 24th October, and 5th November, 1689, in the Leven and Melville Papers.

† For proofs of this, see Letters in the Leven and Melville Papers.

to claim their seats. As the members who now met had been elected by their constituents merely to sit in a convention when no parliament was possible, by their first act they declared their present meeting to be a parliament. By their second act, they ratified the sovereign authority of William and Mary.* But after this the current of legislation no longer ran smoothly. An opposition to the government had been organized, embracing some of the ablest and neediest men of the day—men who had been disappointed of place, and who, for the first time in a Scotch parliament, exhibited the now well-known tactics of the opposition benches, by giving all the annoyance they could to the party in power. By the light of the Leven and Melville Papers, we can clearly trace the manœuvres of the contending factions. The Club, for so the opposition was called, had resolved upon the total abolition of the Lords of the Articles, and upon the expulsion from power of all who had been implicated in the tyrannies of the Stewarts. William, on the other hand, was willing to modify the constitution of the Articles, but not to abolish them, and had resolved that his government should comprehend the strength of all parties, without reference to the past.

The government were anxious to bring up ecclesiastical affairs, that the time of the parliament might be occupied with legislating upon these. The Club resolved that ecclesiastical affairs should not be touched till their grievances were redressed.† It came to a vote, and church-government was delayed, and the abolition of the Articles was taken up, upon which there ensued a violent debate. About a fortnight later the Commissioner proposed, that seeing they

* Tarbet's Acts of the Scottish Parliament.

† On the 26th of June 1689, Sir John Dalrymple writes to Lord Melville—"The party thinks the king will certainly in this session establish the church-government, and if it were done, other things that are not of so much moment may be left unfinished; therefore they are prevailed with to stave off that which would anticipate many idle and humorous questions. But I am sure the generality of ministers would not be of that opinion; so to-morrow we are like to have a warm diet." On the 27th of June, Hamilton wrote to Melville—"I told them I desired them to consider of the settling of the Church, of purpose to give them business until his Majesty's pleasure came." (Leven and Melville Papers, pp. 88, 89.)

were not likely to agree in regard to the committees to be substituted for the Articles, they should settle the government of the Church in open parliament. Lord Belhaven spoke in favour of this; Lord Polwarth opposed it, declaring that there was no doing business in open parliament, and that committees must first be established.* The Church's polity was again put off.

Besides these impediments thrown in the way of the Church's settlement by the contentions of political parties, there were great difficulties in the subject itself, and a great variety of opinions regarding it. The Viscount Tarbet, in a memorial relating to Church affairs laid before the government, remarked that church-government had been made the pretence for the troubles of Scotland for a hundred years; that Episcopacy was odious to one part of the nation, Presbytery to the other; that the Episcopalians were the more numerous and powerful, the Presbyterians the more zealous and hot; that the parliament contained a majority of Presbyterians by the new mode of election pursued in burghs, but that the majority of the nobility and barons were for Episcopacy; that if any one party got the power of settling the Church's polity, the other party would kick against it, and probably overturn it. He therefore proposed, as a compromise, that the outed ministers should be replaced, where the heritors of the most land in the parish desired it; that all the ministers holding benefices should be allowed to retain them, upon condition of their recognising the government; that vacant churches should be planted by the people where there was no patron, and by the patron where there was one; and that presbyteries and synods, under the presidency of perpetual moderators, salaried out of the bishops' teinds, should be entrusted with the government of all ecclesiastical affairs.†

That the parliament should regulate the affairs of the Church was plain Erastianism. This happy thought occurred to the Episcopal clergy of the Diocese of Aberdeen, and

* Letter, Lockhart to Melville, 11th July 1689. (Leven and Melville Papers.)

† Leven and Melville Papers, pp. 125–27.

therefore they laid before the Estates an address, begging that a General Assembly should be called to determine the Church's polity. The Royal Commissioner was thought to favour this plan; but the Earl of Crawford and the staunch Presbyterians cried out against it: The Conformist clergy would outvote the Nonconformists by six to one, and a species of Episcopacy would again be established;* the parliament must give a polity to the Church. It was the same turn which affairs had taken at the time of the Reformation, when some of the bishops protested that the changes to be effected in ecclesiastical affairs ought of right to be entrusted to a convocation of the clergy. Politicians had no calling within the courts of the temple.

In truth, one of the greatest difficulties to be solved was, who were to be the ministers and who were to be the rulers of the Revolution Church. Some were anxious that the Presbytery of 1592 should at once be established; but others argued that the Church must be purged before its courts were constituted; for, if not, the Episcopalians who still retained their parishes would in every case have a sweeping majority. Crawford wrote again and again to Lord Melville, earnestly urging this important consideration. Patronage, too, it was argued, must be abolished, or Episcopal patrons would thrust Episcopal incumbents into their parishes.

Thus difficulty rose above difficulty. The Duke of Hamilton was in favour of some scheme which would comprehend the Episcopalians; the Club, which commanded the majority of the House, promised the people that they would lend their help to the establishment of Presbytery, in its purest form, when their own ends were served.† The one party reminded the Estates of the violence of Presbytery in its day of power, and insisted that it should be restricted; the other party spoke of the persecutions of the Prelatists, and asked that they should be plucked up, root and branch. The president, in his own peculiar way, wrote to the secretary:—"I hope the Lord in His own time will dissipate these fogs that blind some of us, and enable us to erect a second temple, the glory

* Leven and Melville Papers, p. 137.

† Ibid. pp. 90, 91.

of which shall outshine that which was first in our purest times."*

At length, about the middle of July, an act was passed abolishing Episcopacy, as a great grievance to the nation, and declaring that their Majesties, with consent of the Estates, would establish such a church-government as should be agreeable to the inclinations of the people. At the same time an act was voted repealing the Act 1669, regarding the royal supremacy. The first of these was touched by the sceptre, and became law; but the second, together with an act afterwards passed to restore all the Presbyterian ministers ejected in 1662, were not touched; and so they remained, in the meantime, dead letters in the statute-book.†

Episcopacy was now thrown down; but Presbytery was yet to be built up. On the 22d of July the Commissioner laid before the Estates the draft of a bill for settling the government of the Church, which may be considered as containing the views of William and his government. It revived the Act 1592, generally regarded as the charter of Presbytery. It respected the rights of patrons. It ordained that all ministers in the kingdom should conform to the Presbyterian government; and that, if they did so, and took the Oath of Allegiance, they should be continued in their livings. It provided that the ministers ejected for not conforming to Episcopacy, and for refusing to take the Test, should be restored to their parishes; and those removed to make way for them provided for otherwise. It declared that the ecclesiastical courts must not meddle with civil affairs, as great scandal had thence arisen; and that, to see this carried out, a royal commissioner should have a right to sit in them all.‡ This carefully guarded measure did not please the high-flying Presbyterians. Another bill, drawn up in agreement with an address presented by the Presbyterian ministers, was the same day laid on the table by Lord

* Leven and Melville Papers, p. 137.

† See Tarbet's Collection of Acts. Also Melville Papers—Hamilton to Melville, 18th July; also Crawford to Melville, 23d July and 1st August.

‡ A copy of this bill will be found in the Appendix to Carstares' State Papers.

Cardross. The Commissioner sent them both up to London to be canvassed there.*

A few days more, and the news of Dundee's victory at the wild Pass of Killiecrankie burst upon the metropolis. It was at first reported that General Mackay was killed, and that Dundee was pursuing his victory. The parliament was paralyzed. But it was remarked that, while grief clouded almost every face, some of the westland Whigs looked gladder than ever: it was even said they were ready to flee to arms, and that, if they did so, they would leave his Majesty no more authority than the Doge of Venice.† When intelligence of the disaster became more certain and more minute—when it was known that Dundee had fallen, and that Mackay was rallying his broken regiments—the panic began to abate. However, the parliament remained as unmanageable as ever. William refused to yield to its demands. It refused to vote him supplies. Finding it to become more and more troublesome, the Royal Commissioner adjourned it on the 2d of August.‡

Thus the Estates broke up, and the kingdom was without a Church; Prelacy had been overthrown, but nothing had yet been substituted in its stead. By his Majesty's authority, kirk-sessions, presbyteries, and synods were meeting;§ by their own authority, bishops were still ordaining priests, granting warrants for marriages, rejoicing in their titles; and the deprived ministers were suing for their stipends before the commissariat courts.‖ The community were in perfect uncertainty as to what was to be done, and the most contradictory reports were everywhere in circulation. It was said that some of the outed curates were to be forced back upon their parishes, and the westland gentry talked of putting themselves in a posture of defence.¶ The members

* Leven and Melville Papers—Hamilton to Melville, 23d and 25th July; also Crawford to Melville, 23d July, pp. 186–88.

† Sir William Lockhart to Melville, 30th July 1689.

‡ Hamilton to Melville, 1st and 2d August.

§ Leven and Melville Papers—Instructions of the King to his Council, July 1689.

‖ Ibid.—Crawford to Melville, 24th December.

¶ Ibid.—Cunningham to Lord Cardross, 9th August.

of the Club declared loudly that the king had failed in his promises. On the other hand, it was told how pitiless the Council was in casting clergymen out of their cures for refusing to keep a fast on the Sabbath-day—the highest festival of the Church; and how Presbyterians were rebaptizing Episcopal children. There were even rumours that a coalition had been formed between the party of Hamilton and the Club, and that its object was to drive Melville and Stair from office, and burk Presbytery.* In contemplating these things, Lord Crawford wrote to Lord Melville that he was like Hannah, of a sorrowful spirit; and a fortnight later he declared he could find no sleep for thinking of the Church. "For though I dare not question," said he, "but that God hath begun to put His feet upon our waters, and that He will not draw in His arm which He hath bared until He make His enemies His footstool, and that He is an overmatch for them all; that He will find out carpenters to fray all those horns which push at His ark, and that in due time He will level all those mountains which stand in Zerubbabel's way; yet I have my fainting fits, and my distrustful heart doth often dictate harsh things to me." From this the President of the Scottish Parliament proceeds to plead poverty, and very pitifully he does it: "Though my own case," he continues, "were such as I were put to seek my next meal, as has been the fortune of a better man than I am, and is not very far from my present lot, yet I will serve his Majesty as affectionately as if I were loaded with rewards."†

Besides the dangers which were known, there were others which were unknown, lying like hidden rocks under the violent contrary currents of public thought. Sir James Montgomery, the leader of the Club, had entered into a plot, in which some of the greatest nobles in the kingdom were engaged, to bring back James, upon condition that he would establish Presbytery. The wildest Whigs joined hands with the wildest Jacobites to compass this utopian plan. Happily the conspiracy came to naught, and six months revealed to the world the whole mystery of their iniquity.

* Leven and Melville Papers—Sir John Dalrymple to Melville, 8th Feb. 1690.
† Ibid.—Lord Crawford to Lord Melville, 20th August 1689.

A.D. 1690. Thus months passed away, and the year 1690 began. King William was quite prepared to establish Presbytery, but he was most unwilling to abolish patronage.* Moreover, he was desirous that the foundations of the new Church should be as widely laid as possible, and that it should comprehend all the ministers of the old Church who chose to conform to its discipline. But he began to see that some concession was necessary, if a Church was to be built up at all. On the 25th of April the parliament met which was to give us the Establishment which we still enjoy. Its first act was to abolish the Act 1669, which asserted the king's supremacy over all persons and in all causes. Its second act was to restore all the Presbyterian ministers who had been ejected from their livings for not complying with Prelacy. This done, the parliament paused in its full career of ecclesiastical legislation, and abolished the Lords of the Articles, who for so many centuries had managed the whole business of the Scotch Estates, and ordained that the electors of commissioners to the Estates should take the Oath of Allegiance before exercising the franchise.

The next act forms the foundation of our present Establishment. It ratifies the "Westminster Confession of Faith;" it revives the Act 1592; it repeals all the laws in favour of Episcopacy; it legalizes the ejections of the western rabble; it declares that the government of the Church was to be vested in the ministers who were outed for nonconformity, on and after the 1st January 1661, and were now restored, and those who had been or should be admitted by them; it appoints the General Assembly to meet; and empowers it to nominate visitors to purge out all insufficient, negligent, scandalous, and erroneous ministers, by due course of ecclesiastical process.† In this act the Presbyterians gained all that they

* On the 29th April 1690, Sir William Lockhart wrote to the Master of Melville—"The king, as to the settlement of Presbytery, seems only to stick at the patronages. He says it is the interest of the Crown, and the taking of men's property, and thinks that all their meetings, the General Assemblies, should be called the Authority. (Leven and Melville Papers.)

† See Tarbet's Acts of the Scottish Parliament.

could desire, as Presbytery was established, and the government of the Church was placed entirely in their hands.

By this act, the Westminster Confession became the creed of the Church, and is recorded at length in the minutes of the parliament. But the Catechisms and the "Directory of Worship" are not found by its side. A pamphleteer of the day declares, that the Confession was read amid much yawning and weariness, and, by the time it was finished, the Estates grew restive, and would hear no more. It is at least certain that the Catechisms and Directory are not once mentioned, though the Presbyterian ministers were very anxious that they should. From this it would appear that, while the State has fixed the Church's faith, it has not fixed the Church's worship. The Church may adopt any form of worship she pleases without violating any act of parliament. She must ever believe as the Westminster divines believed; but she may worship in a surplice, or without a surplice, with a liturgy, or without a liturgy; in this she is free. The Covenants were utterly ignored, though there were many in the Church who would have wished them revived.*

Patronage still existed, but it also was doomed. The king had instructed Lord Melville, who acted as his Commissioner in this parliament, to give up patronage if it was found necessary. Melville staved off the matter as long as he could; but the arrival of the French fleet on the English coast, and the discovery of Montgomery's conspiracy with the Jacobites, convinced him that it was necessary to propitiate the parliament and the Presbyterians by yielding even this.† It was enacted that in all vacancies the heritors and elders should nominate a person for the approval of the congregation; and that if the congregation disapproved of the nominee, they were to give in their reasons of disap-

* Burton's History of Scotland, vol. i. p. 196.

† Leven and Melville Papers. The king, in his instructions to Melville, 25th February 1690, says, "You are to pass an act for abolishing patronage if the parliament shall desire the same." His Majesty, in his remarks on the Act for Settling Church Government in Scotland, transmitted to Lord Melville on the 22d May, speaks differently, and as if he were determined to preserve patronage. Lord Melville, in his report to the king, explains the pressing circumstances under which he passed the act.

proval to the Presbytery, by whom the matter was to be finally determined. In consideration of their being deprived of their right of presentation, patrons were to receive from the parish the sum of six hundred merks, and a right to all the teinds to which no other could show a title.

It was not without a grudge that William granted so much to his Presbyterian subjects. He was fearful of offending the English Church; he was anxious that as many of the Episcopal clergy should be retained in their livings as possible; he dreaded the violence of men who were still smarting under recent injuries, and who now held in their hand the whole ecclesiastical power of the country; and though he gave his consent to the abolition of patronage, he appears to have afterwards rued his having done it.

One of the great problems of the time was, who were to form the governing body of the new Church—the whole clergy of the kingdom, or only the uncompromising Presbyterians?* The parliament had solved this difficulty by declaring, that only those who had been outed for nonconformity since 1661 should exercise the governing power; and of these only sixty now remained. They were allowed to associate with themselves such ministers and elders as they chose; but still it was felt to be a hazardous experiment to entrust the fate of so many in the hands of so few, and that in a period of bitter theological strife. As the day for the holding of the Assembly approached, the government felt anxious

* "I see," wrote Sir John Dalrymple to Lord Melville, on the 24th July 1689, "we shall make no advance at this time in the Church government. Some talk that they will not have Presbytery established, till the Church be purged, and it be cleared in whose hands it must be committed; so they say, there may be an act in plain parliament, that all thrust out either by their nonconformity to Episcopacy or the Test may be restored, and a committee of parliament named, eight for each state, with some ministers on both sides, to determine who of the curates are vicious and scandalous, and who are to be retained." "It appears strange," wrote Lord Crawford, "that it should be pleaded by any that the government of the Church be put equally in the hands of conform ministers and nonconform, when Prelacy is abolished, the act for that effect touched, and the whole bulk of such disaffected to our civil interest, unto a degree of praying for the late king. Can it be imagined we shall have Presbytery established, or that government continued, when the management is in the hands of men of different, if not opposite, principles, but being three to one for number, would certainly in a short time cast out such as were not of a piece with them?" See Leven and Melville Papers.

about the result. Letters were written by influential noblemen to all the influential ministers, begging them to observe moderation. The great patron of Presbyterianism, the Earl of Crawford, was busy among his friends, telling them how much depended upon their conduct, and that a reverse of fortune was not impossible if their violence was unbearable. They were urged to do little more than meet, take possession as it were of the fabric of the Church, and then dissolve, leaving legislation to calmer times.*

The 16th of October came, and the General Assembly met, after an interval of forty years.† Gabriel Cunningham, the Moderator of the last Assembly, occupied the chair, till a new Moderator was chosen. It was as if the Church had been in a dead sleep these forty years, and recommenced its work exactly where it left it when the catalepsis came on.‡

* See Leven and Melville Papers.

† This Assembly consisted of about a hundred and eighty members, lay and clerical. There were no representatives from the north.

‡ This seems to have been copied by the inferior courts, as the following interesting minute of the Presbytery of Perth shows:—"At Perth, 30th July 1690, Mr Alexander Pitcairn, minister at Dron, having now re-entered to the exercise of his ministrie there again, by virtue of an act of the Convention of Estates of this kingdom, ordaining ministers that were outed of their ministrie anno 1662 (when our Presbyterian government was subverted and Prelacie introduced), that are yet alive, to return now to their former charges. And the said Mr Alexander Pitcairn, being at the foresaid time Moderator of this presbytery, doeth now again, with the hearty consent and approbation of the brethren present, take the chair.

"After prayer there were present with the said Moderator [here follow the names of five ministers and two elders].

"The presbyterie being thus constituted, taking into their serious consideration the happy re-establishment of our government (Prelacie being by law abolished), and finding the desolate condition of the congregations within our bounds, with respect not only to the want of ministers, but also of a settled eldership, which, as an ecclesiastical judicatory in concurrence with the heritors, ought to call faithful pastors for feeding the flocks that hitherto have been as sheep scattered without shepherds, a motion was made, whether there should be forthwith a nomination by their respective congregations, to be thereafter elected and ordained as ruling elders, conform to the constitution of this Church, and that without respect to any form of a session that was under Prelacie, those of the Prelatic session being by the Prelatists themselves disowned to be such, yea! or not! And now being put to the vote, it was carried by plurality of votes that the people should proceed to a nomination, and the presbytery in their election and ordination, without any regard to the Prelatic elderships, so that both people and presbytery should be free in their nomination and elec-

Lord Carmichael appeared as his Majesty's Commissioner, and presented a letter in which the king, with brief but significant emphasis, said, "We expect that your management shall be such as we shall have no reason to repent of what we have done. A calm and peaceable procedure will be no less pleasing to us than it becometh you. We never could be of the mind that violence was suited to the advancing of true religion; nor do we intend that our authority shall ever be a tool to the irregular passions of any party. Moderation is what religion enjoins, neighbouring Churches expect from, and we recommend to you."*

The first important deed of the Assembly was receiving into the Church the three Cameronian ministers—for there were only three—Thomas Lining, Alexander Shields, and William Boyd. They laid before the Assembly a longer paper and a shorter one: the Assembly received them upon the statement and submission made in the latter, and refused to allow the former to be read, "in regard that though there be several good things in it, yet the same doth also contain several peremptory and gross mistakes, unreasonable and impracticable proposals, and uncharitable and injurious reflections, tending rather to kindle contentions than to compose divisions."†

Such is the history of this transaction as it is to be gathered from the records of the Assembly, but under it there is another history more secret and more marvellous. From

tion *respective*, according to Christ's institution, which is the method the presbytery have resolved to proceed in, in conform to the Acts of the General Meeting of this Church, during the time of the Indulgence under the reign of the late King James, antecedently to the legal establishment of our Church government, and the comfortable alteration of the State under the happie reign of their present Majesties KING WILLIAM AND QUEEN MARY, whom God, in His infinite mercy, stirred up and honoured to be glorious instruments of our delyverance from

POPERIE, PRELACIE, AND TYRANNIE."

The Presbytery of Perth at this time was associated with the Presbytery of Dunkeld and half the Presbytery of Auchterarder, and yet these two presbyteries and a half could muster only five ministers. Pitcairn, mentioned above, was the only minister who had been a member of presbytery in 1662. I am indebted for this minute and information to Mr Wilson, the presbytery clerk.

* See Acts of General Assembly, published by Church Law Society, p. 222.

† Acts of Assembly, pp. 224, 225.

the time the Prince of Orange landed in the country, and Presbytery was likely to be established, the ministers of the Society people had shown a disposition to forget the differences which had separated them from their Presbyterian brethren, and concur with them in building up the Revolution Church. But the people had become sterner and stricter than their ministers, as is frequently the case, and declared they could not join hands with such men till they acknowledged their defections, and, in public synod, condemned them. Hamilton of Preston, who had fled to Holland after the rout of Bothwell, was now come back: his fanaticism was not abated by his banishment; he was revered by the Societies as a prophet and a king, and he counted it his duty to relieve his burdened conscience by protesting against the acknowledgment of the Prince of Orange, without his having taken the Covenants; against the Earl of Angus's regiment, as a sinful association with malignants; and against joining with ministers from whom they had withdrawn, till first they acknowledged their sins.

Meetings were multiplied, reasons were given for and against, replies and duplies were written, and bitterness and wrath reigned in these assemblies of the saints. When we hear all, we shall not marvel that the ministers were anxious to escape from the spirit they had evoked. They had no voice in their own Societies. They were kept merely to preach and administer the sacraments to such as the Societies deemed worthy—a chosen few. A class of men had arisen who overrode the ministers, and ruled all things. When a general meeting was held, the ministers were put to the door; when a decision was come to, they were called in to hear it. In fact, to such a subordinate place had the ministerial gift been degraded, that all the Societies in Scotland had generally but one minister; after the death of Cameron, Cargill alone remained; after the death of Cargill, Renwick was raised up; after the death of Renwick, Lining was ordained; and in 1688 at least, Shields and Boyd were only preachers. It is impossible to read the annals of these times without being struck by the strong likeness between these Covenanting Societies and the congregations now in

Caithness and Ross, where "the Men" are dominant. Fanaticism, driven by the light of advancing civilisation from the south and west, appears to have taken refuge in the far north, where it unhappily lingers still.*

Lining, Shields, and Boyd had made up their minds to join the Church, and did it, notwithstanding that the paper in which they mentioned the backslidings of the land and its breaches of Covenant was suppressed. But their followers were not so bent upon what they regarded as a weak and wicked compliance. A document containing their views was drawn up, and a deputation hurried to Edinburgh to present it to the Assembly. In this document they declared how affecting it had been for them to behold many ministers join hands with the perjured Prelatic hirelings and intruders; that it was an augmentation of their sorrow to see many others accepting an indulgence which flowed from the supremacy of Christ bestowed upon a miserable mortal; and a sad stumbling-block to see others faintly fleeing the country or lurking in hiding-places who ought to have put the trumpet to their mouth, and given forth a certain sound. They declared that it had been humbling to them, when iniquity was established by law, to see ministers yielding obedience, taking sinful oaths themselves, and teaching others to do so too; and very burdensome to their consciences, when a Popish toleration was granted, to think that many had taken advantage of it, and rendered thanks to the Popish tyrant. These things had been done and had not been repented of. Ministers were hiding their sins, instead of mourning over them. The Covenants, moreover, had not been renewed—they had not even been mentioned; the sovereigns were not asked to purge England and Ireland of Prelacy; and the period be-

* Another confirmation of this opinion is to be found in the sentence of deposition passed by the Assembly of 1705 upon John Hepburn, who appears to have inherited the principles of the Cameronians, and fraternized with the remnant of them. "And in particular," the sentence proceeds, "finding that he asserted that communicating with persons scandalous made those that communicate with them guilty of unworthy communicating—that he neither has dispensed the Holy Sacrament of the Supper to others, nor partaken thereof himself, for more than sixteen years," &c. Such cases have been heard of in days not remote.

tween 1638 and 1649, being years of the right hand of the Most High, had not been revived; curates were suffered to continue in their parishes, and many who had been guilty of gross degrees of compliance were not debarred from the sacraments by the discipline of the Church.

Happily this paper was arrested in its progress to the Assembly by the Committee of Overtures. It had been safer to have brought into the Assembly-house a box of detonating gunpowder; for three-fourths of the clerical conclave were implicated in the imaginary crimes which were so minutely detailed, and their anger would undoubtedly have burned against the plain-speaking Cameronians. The committee told the deputation that their paper could not be received, but tried to satisfy their scruples by saying that God's causes of wrath against the land would be carefully specified in the act appointing a national fast.*

The Societies were indignant at the treatment they received. They thought their peculiar principles were the salt of the Church, and now they were quietly thrown aside. They abused their ministers for having betrayed them; they abused themselves, with the same good-will with which the monks scourged their own backs, for having owned the Prince of Orange, for having owned the Convention, for having owned the Assembly. They were at a loss as to what they should do. They had now no ministers. Some of them thought they might go and hear the Presbyterian ministers, after giving in to them a written protest against their backslidings, and setting their sins before their face.† Some of them kept carefully aloof from the Presbyterian Church altogether, as from an accursed thing. In time they managed to get a minister who thought like themselves. But they soon sunk into insignificance. The importance which attached to them when they were hung for attending a field conventicle no longer belonged to them when they

* I have taken my account of these proceedings from a book which may be considered as authoritative—"Faithful Contendings Displayed"—almost copying the language of the documents referred to.

† A copy of a paper of this kind, which was proposed, and perhaps in some cases used, is given in the "Faithful Contendings."

were allowed to meet where they pleased, preach what they pleased, and mourn over the backslidings of their brethren as long as they pleased. Still they linger on, and may be regarded as the first-born of Scottish Dissenters. They hold a religious creed which is inconsistent with their political duties; but their peculiar faith is only a tradition, and is quite inoperative. Speculatively, they do not recognise the monarch, for she has not subscribed the Covenants; they do not pay taxes; they do not exercise the franchise; but practically, they discharge these duties as honestly and well as the most orthodox and loyal subjects in the realm.

But we must return to the Assembly from which we have wandered, to follow the career of the children of the Covenant. It was thought necessary that a national fast should be held; but it was made subject of debate as to what were the sins for which they should mourn. Some ministers, more zealous than wise, insisted that in the act appointing the fast there should be a careful catalogue of sinful compliances, such as taking the Test Oath and acknowledging the Episcopate; and it is abundantly evident that, if this had been done, some wounds, instead of being healed, would have been opened up anew, and the day of fasting, instead of being consecrated to humiliation, would have been devoted to malignity, evil-speaking, and strife. Happily prudence prevailed, and the act was carefully worded, mentioning only such sins as most would readily acknowledge to be sins, and alluding to others only in a general way. Besides this, the Assembly made some regulations regarding the union of presbyteries where their complement of ministers was incomplete; regarding the celebration of marriage, the reclaiming of Papists, the public administration of Baptism and the Lord's Supper; and for a supply of Irish Bibles and catechisms to the Highland parishes. The Assembly farther annulled all the anathemas and excommunications thundered thirty or forty years ago by the Resolutioners and Protesters against each other; and finally appointed two commissions, one to visit the country to the north of the Tay, and the other the country to the south of the Tay, to purge out of the ministry all

who should be found to be insufficient, supinely negligent, scandalous, or erroneous, and to see that all who were retained in the Church and admitted to its government signed the Confession of Faith, and submitted to the Presbyterian discipline.* After sitting for nearly a month, the Assembly adjourned, and Lord Carmichael had the happiness to report to his government that all its proceedings had been characterized by moderation.† The high principles of the Covenanting period had been allowed to sink into silence. Some wished the king to be informed in the letter which they sent him, that Presbytery was not only in accordance with the inclinations of the people, but had its warrant in the Word of God; but even this was allowed to drop.

But though the Assembly had happily avoided excess, there was a danger that its commissions might not. They were armed with very plenary power to bind and to loose, to take in and to cast out, and there were fears they might abuse it. If the Church cherished hostility to any, it was to the Episcopalians; and it was with the Episcopalians the commissions had to do. General Mackay, who was a staunch Presbyterian and a good man, felt this, as many others did, and wrote from London to his friend the Laird of Grant, who was on the commission for the north side of the Tay, strongly urging lenity. He declared that the permanence of Presbyterianism depended upon its being made supportable to the king and the kingdom. He hinted his fears that undue severity might be used, and affirmed that if he were as much an enemy to Presbytery as he was a friend, he could easily enlist on the side of the government a more formidable party against presbytery than he could for it.‡

* The Instructions given to the commissions are to be found in the Acts of Assembly, p. 232.

† Leven and Melville Papers.

‡ The letter to which reference is made, was recently discovered by Mr Joseph Robertson, of the Register Office, and read before the Society of Antiquaries, in whose Proceedings it is now printed. It is interesting and important enough to deserve to be copied. It is dated 4th December 1690. "I exhort you," says Mackay to the Laird of Grant, "to study moderation in your commission, which will do the Presbyterian interest there more good than men there are generally aware of. The king's intentions are certainly toward

The commissions did not use their power with moderation. Their instructions prevented them from bringing any one to their bar merely for past compliance with Episcopacy; but under the head of insufficient, negligent, scandalous, or erroneous, they managed to reach a large number of Episcopal ministers, whom they deposed from their office. Is there not some reason to suspect that it was their Episcopacy that gave the deepest dye to their crimes? In the prelatic pamphlets of the day, we are told that the most frivolous pretexts were enough to condemn an obnoxious man; the having recommended to his parishoners "Scougall's Catechism," or "The Whole Duty of Man;" for having repeated the Creed, or sung the Doxology; having spoken ill of the Covenant, or well of the bishops.* These charges are probably much exaggerated; but it is certain that the commissions made great havoc of the Church. Whole provinces were laid desolate.† The churches were shut up,

that government as the fittest for that nation, but it is also his earnest desire that it may be made as supportable to those who seem to dissent from it, that even they may fall in liking with it, and so the kingdom become one body, which surely is the likeliest way for the subsistence of that which is so newly established. Many are of opinion that you, Brodie, Foulis, and Grange, being upon that northern commission, nothing is to be expected but severity; but I am sure that no man, who will duly weigh all circumstances, but will confess with me, that, humanly speaking, the standing of that government doth consist in the making it supportable to the king and kingdom; for let men flatter themselves as they will, I tell you who know Scotland, and where the weakness and strength of it doth lie, that if I were as much an enemy to that interest as I am a friend, I would without difficulty engage to form in Scotland a more formidable party against it, even for their Majesties' government, than can be formed for it. Therefore, pray you gentlemen, take a friendly advertisement, and let your zeal be tempered with prudence, for no man in England or Scotland can judge of your circumstances better than myself; therefore, my serious advice is, that you make not your government heavy and uneasy to a king who hath given you so large concessions." It is a little startling to hear Mackay declare that he could form a more formidable party for William's government among the Episcopalians than among the Presbyterians. Yet I believe that what he says may be true in this way, that besides the highland clans, he could count upon the nobles and gentry, with the greatest following and the largest influence.

* History of the First General Assembly, 1690, quoted by Stephens in his History of the Church, vol. iii. p. 525.

† M'Cormick's Life of Carstares, p. 50. History of the First General Assembly. In this pamphlet two ministers are said to have declared in the Assembly, "That there was not so much as the face of a church in all Galloway and

and the services discontinued. It was found easier to pluck up than to plant. Enough of qualified men could not be found to fill up the vacant cures. The evils brought upon the country by the Episcopalians in 1662, by the sudden ejection of nearly three hundred ministers, were repeated by the Presbyterians in 1690.

It is certain that the most of the clergy thus cast out of their livings were disaffected to the government; that they refused to pray for King William, and continued to pray for King James; but it is certain also that King William himself was more inclined to overlook this than the Presbyterian Church. Many are said to have been deterred from giving in their submission from the dread that, when they could not be accused of disloyalty, they would be found guilty of ignorance, heresy, or sin. They preferred to be ruined, retaining their principles, than to surrender their principles, and then find that they had sold themselves for nought.

It was thought necessary that the universities should be purged as well as the Church, for the universities were almost entirely Episcopalian. An act had been passed declaring that no principal, professor, regent, master, or other functionary should be allowed to bear office in any college or university unless he took the Oaths of Allegiance, subscribed the Confession of Faith, and submitted himself to the government of the Presbyterian Church. Under this act a commission was appointed to visit each of the four universities; and in the summer of 1690 they went to work, evidently with hearty good-will. At Edinburgh, Glasgow, St Andrews, the great majority of the principals and professors stood true to their former faith and allegiance, and accordingly were dispossessed, to make way for Presbyterian successors. Men, venerable for their wisdom and years, were driven from the seats of learning which they had adorned, and thrown penniless upon the world. Such are the sad incidents which attend revolution. Though a com-

the west; there were no ministers in all that extensive country but themselves." It was in the northern provinces, however, that the greatest desolation was made. For the next twenty years the great business of the Assembly was planting vacant parishes, and occasionally supplying them with itinerant preachers till they were planted.

mission was appointed to visit Aberdeen, they never even entered upon their duties; and there the academicians were allowed to retain their seats undisturbed. It was probably felt that in the stronghold of Episcopacy the attempt to cast them out would be a dangerous experiment; and that the citizens would maintain them in their chairs, in spite of any sentences of the commission.*

The Episcopalians who had been thrust out of the Church by the zeal of the Assembly's commission, knowing the tolerant temper of the sovereigns, carried their griefs to the foot of the throne. A deputation proceeded to Flanders, where William was with the army, and, getting access to him, managed to enlist his sympathies in their cause. They were made the bearers of letters to the Council and the commission, in which the monarch begged that severity should cease, that redress should be given to those who had already been wronged, and that such of the Episcopalians as qualified to the government and submitted to Presbytery should be allowed to remain in their parishes. The royal letters were regarded by the stern Presbyterians as an Erastian interference with spiritual affairs, and treated almost with contempt. The commission went vigorously on in its work of purgation, believing itself doing the work of God. A second letter had no more effect than the first.†

The Assembly had been adjourned till the 1st of November

* Skinner's Ecclesiastical History. Stephen's History, &c.

† In one of these letters, written at the Hague on the 13th February 1691, William says—"Whereas there hath been humble application made to us by several ministers, for themselves and others, who lately served under Episcopacy in that our ancient kingdom, we have thought good, as well for the good and advantage of that Church, as the public justice and welfare of the nation, and the interest of our government, to signify our pleasure to you, that you make no distinction of men, otherwise well qualified for the ministry, who are willing to join with you in the acknowledgment of, and submission to, the government in Church and State, as it is by law now established, though they may have formerly conformed to the law introducing Episcopacy; and that you give them no vexation or disturbance for that cause, or upon that head; and that in regard many of these ministers are turned out summarily, without any sentence or order of law, if such shall be called to be ministers of any vacant congregations, by plurality of heritors or elders, we judge it reasonable that you admit them, where there is no just cause to the contrary, without making any difficulty."

1691, but before the day of meeting came it was again adjourned till the 15th of January 1692.* By these adjournments, more than by anything else, did William vex the Presbyterians. When the 15th of January arrived, the Assembly met. The southern presbyteries were pretty well represented; but from all the presbyteries north of Dundee only five commissioners came. Its sederunt of the northern synods is a perfect blank. Some have attributed this to the length of the road and the inclemency of the season, and even insinuated that William had purposely adjourned the Assembly to the depths of winter.† But a much better reason for no Presbyterians coming from the north is simply that there were no Presbyterians to come. The septentrional regions of the country were almost entirely Episcopal.

The Earl of Lothian occupied the chair of state as Royal Commissioner, and presented the usual letter from the king. It was somewhat sharp. William referred to the letters which he had written from the Hague and Anderlecht. He complained that the assurances he had received of their readiness to take their Episcopal brethren into communion with them had not been fulfilled. He stated that it had been represented to him that they were not a true General Assembly of the Church, as a majority of the ministers of the Church were unrepresented. He informed them that he had instructed the Conformist ministers to apply to them for admission, in terms of a formula and declaration which he had delivered to the Commissioner. He said, he thought it was just and right that the commissions for managing these matters should, for the sake of impartiality, be composed of an equal number of Episcopalians and Presbyterians. The Lord High Commissioner followed up this letter by a speech, in which he strongly urged the Assembly to admit the Conformist Episcopal clergy. "Church government," said

* The proceedings of this Assembly are not to be found among the printed Acts, probably on account of the violence with which it was closed. Recently, however, Principal Lee has printed its proceedings from the records in his possession, and it is from this interesting document that the account in the text is taken.

† This is the account of the matter which Principal Lee gives in his Introduction to the Proceedings of this Assembly.

he, "is a hedge set about the vineyard, but it was never intended to keep out fellow-labourers."

Two days after this the Commissioner produced the formula and declaration, which the king proposed should be taken by Episcopal ministers before their reception into the Church. The subscriber promised to submit to, and heartily concur with, Presbyterian government, and sign the Confession of Faith and Catechisms. The Assembly referred the consideration of it to a committee. Following up the good intentions of the king, Episcopal ministers from different parts of the country sent in addresses to the Assembly, begging to be admitted into the bosom of the Presbyterian Church. These addresses were disposed of, as troublesome matters often are, by being referred to a committee. One man only was admitted, for he had not been ashamed to declare that he had always been a Presbyterian at heart.

Thus day after day passed, and still nothing was done toward the great object which the king had in view—the amalgamation of the Presbyterians and Episcopalians. The truth is, the Presbyterians, though they did not broadly say so, were not prepared for such an amalgamation. Recent circumstances had increased rather than lessened the jealousies of the contending factions. There were changes in the government which seemed to bode no good to the Presbyterians. The Earl of Tweeddale, who had been involved in the Jacobite plot, was made Chancellor of the Kingdom. The Earl of Melville, the fast friend of Presbytery, was removed from his post of Secretary of State, and the Master of Stair, whose hands were red with the blood of the saints, was put in his place. There was another circumstance which equally annoyed the Presbyterians and elated the Episcopalians. The manner in which the Episcopal clergy had been thrust out of their livings, and reduced to sudden beggary, was loudly talked of in England. Squires and bishops were alike indignant. The government got the blame of suffering such things, though William himself was as indignant as any. The Episcopalians well knew this state of feeling, and already spoke as if the battle were theirs. They proclaimed that the king was with them, that the government was with

them, that England was with them, and that the Church of Scotland would soon be Episcopal once more. These anticipated triumphs only served to provoke the Presbyterians, and to render them more jealous and more unyielding than ever. They were suspicious of the king.* They knew that notwithstanding all the ejections which had taken place the Episcopalians still formed a majority in the Church, and that if they were admitted to a vote in the Church's judicatories, they might frame and fashion matters as they pleased. The sceptre, which they now held, would depart from them.

Nearly a month had now slipped away; the 13th of February had come. On that day the High Commissioner rose up and said—"You have now sat for about a month, which was a competent time both to have done what was the principal design in calling this Assembly—the uniting you with your brethren—and also to have attended to other matters affecting the Church; but his Majesty perceiving no great inclination among you to comply with his demands, hath commanded me to dissolve the present Assembly; so I, in his Majesty's name and authority, do dissolve this General Assembly."

The Commissioner had declared the Assembly dissolved without appointing another day for its meeting. But the Presbyterians had not forgotten their ancient principles. They held that the Church had an inherent right to meet when it pleased; that King William's power was cumulative, not privative; that he might appoint meetings if he chose; but, if he did not, that they were not the less entitled to meet by their authority derived from the King Jesus. When the Commissioner had done speaking, the Moderator therefore rose and asked if the Assembly were dissolved without naming a day for another. "His Majesty will appoint another in due time," said his Grace, "of which you will be timeously advertised." "Shall I be heard a few words?" asked the Moderator. "I cannot hear you as the Moderator," said the Commissioner, "but as a private person you may speak." Upon this the Moderator said, that though they

* Burnet's History, vol. iii. pp. 95, 96.

were under the greatest obligations to his Majesty, and ready to obey his lawful commands in all things, they must declare that the office-bearers in the Church had an intrinsic power to meet about its affairs, and that this dissolution of the Assembly without inditing a new one was not to prevent their yearly General Assemblies, granted by the laws of the kingdom. Having said this, the Moderator was about to close the Assembly by prayer, but the members called upon him to mention a day for their next meeting. The Moderator, accordingly, before pronouncing the blessing, named the third Wednesday of August 1693 as the day to which the Assembly adjourned, which was received with applause.* The contest which the Church had waged with James VI. was thus renewed with William III., a less tyrannical monarch, but a much more dangerous man to meddle with. There was angry feeling on both sides—the king inveighing against the insolence of the Church, and the Church inveighing against the Erastianism of the king.†

But these feelings were, for a time at least, lost in the horror and indignation which filled the country at the massacre which had just been perpetrated in the wild pass of Glencoe. The Highland clans had not yet learned submission to regular government. They still retained their loyalty to the Stewarts, and their fondness for plunder and war. They had fought with Dundee at Killiecrankie, they continued in arms after his death. William offered an indemnity to all who would take the oaths ; and more than once prolonged the period appointed for doing so. The 31st day of December 1691 was finally fixed as the last day for submission, and it was declared that all who had not submitted then would be exposed to military execution. Macdonald of Glencoe held out to the very last, but on the 31st of December he presented himself before the Governor of Fort William, and offered to take the oaths. The governor, being merely a military man, declined to take them ; and, as the

* See Principal Lee's Proceedings of this Assembly. Also Stewart of Pardovan's Collections, book i. title xv.

† Testimony Bearing Exemplified, pp. 283, 284. Burnet's History, vol. iii. p. 96.

snow was deep on the ground, four or five days elapsed before Macdonald could present himself to the sheriff at Inverary; but when he did present himself, after some hesitation, the oaths were regularly administered and taken. In the February following a party of soldiers were quartered in the glen. The inhabitants believing that their chief had made his peace with the government felt no alarm. For twelve days they entertained their guests with highland hospitality. The chief himself was daily with the officers; he drank with them, played at cards with them, and spent the last evening of his life with them. But a horrid butchery had been projected. In the darkness of the night the word was given, and the work was begun. Macdonald was shot down while dressing himself to receive the lieutenant who had knocked at his door as a friend; men and women were dragged from their beds to be murdered on the floor; boys were stabbed when clinging to the soldiers' knees and crying for mercy. About forty were thus massacred, and a miserable remnant fled to the hills, where many of them perished from hunger and cold. The majority of the doomed Macdonalds escaped, but it was only through mismanagement that a single soul was left alive.*

A thrill of horror went over the country as this fearful story was told. It spread beyond the country, and was repeated on the Continent. It gave new hopes to the Jacobites, and inspired the Highland clans with a hatred of William which they had not felt before. His friends tried to excuse him. They said he had signed the instructions not knowing their nature; that he had been kept in ignorance of the submission of the chief; that Breadalbane and the Master of Stair were the authors of the diabolical deed. The country felt then, as it does still, that the monarch was responsible in a large measure for the great crime. It lessened a popularity which had never been great, and cast a dark shade over his many virtues and his great services to the country and the Church.

* Report of the Commission given by his Majesty for inquiring into the slaughter of the men of Glencoe, subscribed at Holyrood House the 20th day of June 1693—to be found in Carstares's State Papers, pp. 236–54. See also Macaulay's History.

In April 1693 the Scottish parliament met. Its first act appointed the third Thursday of every month to be observed as a fast on account of the war which William was waging with France—a tax upon time which a less idle generation could hardly afford. The next act which had an influence upon ecclesiastical affairs was regarding the oaths to be taken to government. The country was kept in a state of perpetual uneasiness by the dread of Jacobite insurrections and invasions. It was known that many of the gentry, and almost all the Episcopal clergy, still fondly cherished an attachment to the exiled dynasty, and clung to the hope of seeing it restored. Yet many of these had taken the Oath of Allegiance. It was suspected that in taking it they meant merely to acknowledge the fact that William reigned, without recognising his right to reign. The Oath of Assurance was therefore devised, in which the swearer declared William to be king, *de jure* as well as *de facto;* and the parliament required the oath to be taken by all holding office, and, among others, by the clergy, both Episcopal and Presbyterian.

When the subject was discussed in parliamentary committee, hints were thrown out that even the Presbyterians might scruple at such an oath, but such fears were deemed to be visionary. It was affirmed that some of the ministers had been sounded, and that not one of them would object; and their great patron, the Earl of Crawford, gave his influence and vote in favour of the act.* When, however, the act was passed and canvassed out of doors, it was found that the Presbyterian ministers were almost unanimously opposed to the taking of the oath. It was argued that the act obliged them dogmatically to define and determine, under the sacred seal of an oath, points which in themselves were doubtful and disputable; that it asked them to lay aside their reason and deliver themselves up, bound hand and heel, as a sacrifice upon every revolution; nay, that it required them to make a precedent by which the Church should be miserably enslaved, and ministers necessitated to juggle with Almighty God, by oath, for which all generations should hold them in abhorrence. "Where is there a point," it was asked, "that

* See Secretary Johnstone's Letters to Carstares in Carstares's State Papers.

hath been more earnestly and obstinately disputed than the doctrine of deposing kings and magistrates? Are there not arguments brought from the Holy Scriptures, from the nature of magistracy, from the peace of society, from the dreadful consequences, the vast deluges of blood, the lamentable dissolution of kingdoms, which have followed such undertakings, whereby many learned and pious men have endeavoured, at all times, to overthrow that king-dethroning power, which never can be practised without greater effusion of blood and violation of all rights than the greatest tyrants have ever occasioned. And why, then, should parliament, at this time of day, impose a yoke upon the Church, which neither we nor our fathers were made sensible of before? Amidst all the past struggles about controverted titles to the crown, the Church was never bound by oath to either of the contending parties, and why should a party oath be imposed upon it now?"* By such general reasonings as these, in regard to the origin of government, the Presbyterians were disinclined to the Oath of Assurance; as the Episcopalians were by a positive belief that James and not William was king by right.

But the act which had the most immediate influence upon ecclesiastical affairs was entitled, "An Act for Settling the Quiet and Peace of the Church." In this act their Majesties were requested to call a meeting of the General Assembly for ordering the affairs of the Church, and more especially for admitting to a share in the government of the Church all the Episcopal ministers who should take the Oaths of Allegiance and Assurance, subscribe the Confession of Faith, and acknowledge the Presbyterian government as the only government of the Church in Scotland. It was farther declared in this act that all who should not qualify themselves might be deposed, and that all who did qualify themselves would be protected in their churches and livings till they were regularly received into the ecclesiastical judicatories.†

* Letter of the English Presbyterians to their brethren in Scotland. See M'Cormick's Life of Carstares, pp. 54–57.

† Tarbet's Acts of the Scottish Parliament.

There was a reason besides that stated in the act for the Estates addressing their Majesties to summon a General Assembly. The Commissioner had dissolved the last Assembly in anger without fixing a day for a future one. The Assembly had appointed a day of its own, and that day was now rapidly approaching. The ministers talked as if they were determined to meet; and the government felt that if they did so, the dignity of the crown would be compromised, and one of its prerogatives surrendered to violence. William either did not feel himself strong enough, or was not arbitrary enough, to do as Cromwell did—surround the Assembly-house with soldiery, and march out the members. The expedient was therefore fallen upon of the Estates addressing their Majesties to call a meeting of the Assembly, not upon the very day fixed by itself, but upon a day not far off.* In this way, the honour both of the king and the Church was saved, in the point upon which they were equally sensitive.

The Presbyterian ministers thought that the terms upon which the Episcopalians were to be admitted to a share in the government of the Church were too easy; the most of the Episcopalians declared that they were so hard that they could not accept of them. How could they take the Oath of Assurance, they said, when even the Presbyterians refused it? There were articles in the Westminster Confession which they could not in conscience subscribe; there were points in the Presbyterian discipline to which they could not in conscience submit. And when such was the case, was it not too bad, they said, that they should be turned out of their parishes, reduced to beggary, and even prevented from exercising in private their sacred functions? They had educated themselves for the ministry, and had entered the Church when Episcopacy was established by law; they had grown gray in ministering at the altar; their parishioners were attached to them, and wished no change; and why, then, should the sacred bond be broken?† If an

* Secretary Johnstone managed to bring this about. See his letter to Carstares, in Carstares's Papers, p. 160.

† Case of the Episcopal Clergy in Scotland. Somers's Tracts, vol. iii. coll. iv. pp. 135–37.

ecclesiastical revolution were occurring in our day, such considerations as these would undoubtedly have weight; but notions about the necessity of protecting existing interests were little known in the seventeenth century. As there was a time under Mussulman rule when pachas turned out of office were necessarily bowstrung, so there has been a time in our Church's history when Episcopalians and Presbyterians, as they in turn came into power, thought it necessary to ruin their predecessors. The Popish incumbents were more kindly dealt with by the Protestants: they had two-thirds of their benefices secured to them so long as they lived.

The General Assembly had been summoned to meet on the 29th of March 1694. In the meantime, the Presbyterian ministers made an application to the Privy Council to be relieved from subscribing the Oath of Assurance; but the Privy Council, instead of granting their request, recommended his Majesty to insist upon every minister taking the oath before he took his seat in the Assembly. His Majesty accordingly instructed his Commissioner, Lord Carmichael, to impose the oath, and if the ministers refused to take it, to dissolve the Assembly.

When Lord Carmichael arrived in Edinburgh, he found that the ministers were firm in their resolution not to comply. In fact, a new objection had been added to their old ones: it was Erastian in an earthly monarch to fence the door of the Assembly with such an oath. The Commissioner felt that, with men in such a mood, to dissolve the Assembly might be equally fatal to the Church and the king. He therefore despatched a messenger to London, representing the state of matters, and asking for instructions. At the same time, the ministers sent up a memorial to Carstares, begging his friendly offices in this critical posture of affairs.

Carstares had been from home, and happened to return to Kensington on the evening of the very day on which the flying packet had arrived. But the king, under the advice of Lord Stair and Lord Tarbet, who represented the refusal of the clergy as rebellious, had already drawn up instructions

to his Commissioner, making the Assurance imperative, and had delivered them to the messenger. Carstares read his letters; and having learned the nature of the despatches the king had sent off, he saw that no time was to be lost, if the Church was to be saved. He managed to get hold of the messenger just as he was ready to start, and required him, in the king's name, to deliver his despatches to him. In possession of these, he went directly to the king's apartment. The lord-in-waiting told him that his Majesty was gone to bed; but Carstares said that he was come on business of the greatest moment, and must get admittance. On entering the room, he found his Majesty asleep. He drew aside the curtain, went down upon his knees at the bedside, and then wakened the king. Amazed to see his chaplain at such an hour and in such a posture, he asked what was the matter. "I am come," said Carstares, "to beg my life." "Is it possible," said William, "you have done anything deserving of death?" Carstares told him he had detained the royal messenger, and produced the despatches he had taken from him. William was not a man easily to brook such an interference, and sharply asked Carstares how he had dared to countermand his orders. Carstares begged to be heard in his defence. William listened attentively while he urged that the Episcopalians were already his enemies, that this oath would make the Presbyterians his enemies too; that oaths were of little avail to a prince if he lost the hearts of his subjects; but that, if he yielded this to them, he would bind them for ever to his throne. The frown gradually left William's countenance as Carstares proceeded; and in the end, he told him to throw the despatches into the fire, and write such instructions as he thought best, and that he would sign them. It was done, and the messenger was soon upon the road travelling post-haste to Edinburgh.

Meanwhile, both the Commissioner and the ministers were in the utmost perplexity. On the very next day the Assembly was to meet, and still the messenger had not returned. Lord Carmichael, by the instructions he had, was bound to dissolve the Assembly; the ministers were determined to assert their authority, and meet notwithstanding.

Both alike dreaded the result. Happily the messenger arrived on the morning of the eventful day, and, when his packet was opened, it was found, to the joy of all, that it was his Majesty's pleasure to dispense with the oaths. When the Assembly met, every minister was more hearty than another in praise of the king.* From that day to this there has been no collision between the Church and the sovereign in regard to the calling of Assemblies. The Commissioner dissolves the Assembly as if all the power were with him; the Moderator dissolves it as if all the power were with him. Either, in like manner, nominates a day for a new one. Thus the old question is still kept alive, but the perfect understanding and inviolate faith of both the parties have prevented it from assuming a troublesome shape.

The Assembly, on proceeding to business, showed its gratitude to the king, by appointing a commission to receive the Episcopal ministers, who qualified themselves according to the terms of the recent act of parliament. It ordained the Lowland synods to furnish sixteen ministers, who should proceed to the north and labour for three months in the parishes which had been deprived of their Episcopal incumbents, and, at the end of the three months, to send sixteen others in their stead, and so on continuously till the Assembly again met. It arranged that presbyteries should send commissioners to the Assembly in proportion to their numerical strength — that presbyteries consisting of not more than twelve members should send two ministers and one elder; that presbyteries consisting of eighteen members should send three ministers and one elder; and that presbyteries consisting of twenty-four ministers should send four ministers and two elders—the rule which exists to the present day. Regulations were also made about appeals, translations, probationers, forms of process, and modes of preaching.† Thus these fathers of the Revolution Church to build up their broken walls.

* This interesting episode in the history of the Church is well told in M'Cormick's Life of Carstares, pp. 57–61.

† See Acts of the Assembly, 1694.

CHAPTER VIII.

In traversing the period subsequent to the Revolution, we feel that we have no longer our old guides to conduct us on our way. John Knox and James Melville are no more. Calderwood has been forty years in his grave, and we have him no more to lead us, not only along the highroad, but into all the quiet bypaths of history. Baillie also is gone, and we miss his pleasant talk about the men and affairs of his time. Wodrow has indeed sprung up to supply their place. He was a boy of ten when William landed at Torbay; but the history which he afterwards wrote goes back into the past, and stops when the Church was emancipated from her sufferings; and his "Correspondence" gives us only some cursory glimpses of the period which followed.

No chronicler arose to chronicle the Revolution in the Church. Nor did any leading Churchman arise to leave the impress of his mind upon the age. The history of Knox is the history of the Reformation. The influence of Melville is to be traced everywhere in the first struggle of Presbytery with Episcopacy. The period of the Covenant without Henderson is like the play of Hamlet with Hamlet left out. But the Revolution has no such man, around whose name all the incidents of the period cluster. The Kennedies, Simsons, and Crichtons, who were raised to the Moderator's chair, are names unknown. William Carstares was undoubtedly the ablest Scotch minister of his time, but he was more a statesman than a Churchman. He rendered great services to the Church; but he did it not from his influence

with his fellow-ministers, but simply from his influence with the king. The Church was firmly founded before his voice was once heard in any of its pulpits, or in any of its courts.

In truth, the ecclesiastical Revolution was not fitted to bring out great talents. The Church was revolutionized from without, not from within. The king and the parliament determined that it was to be Presbyterian, and not Episcopal; they determined who were to exercise its government, and who were to occupy its pulpits. The pattern of the new tabernacle was prescribed in the parliament-house. When the Courts of the Church met, they had little to do but to walk in the footsteps of those who had gone before them. There were no new truths to be published—no new polity to be built up. The ancient tracks and the ancient landmarks still remained.

It is difficult to form a correct conception of the state of the Church in the period succeeding the Revolution. Episcopacy was thrown down, but still it was not quite levelled with the ground. Some parts of the ruin remained almost entire. The bishops were no longer admitted to the parliament or the Privy Council; their factors no longer drew the Episcopal revenues; their voice was no longer heard in the cathedral churches; but most of them still lingered in the country, and received from the Episcopal clergy an homage, which, perhaps, was all the more sincere that it was given to misfortune. In secret they bestowed their apostolic benediction, and still communicated by the imposition of their hands the apostolic gift.

A multitude of the Episcopal ministers still occupied the parish manses, and preached in the parish pulpits. It was the earnest desire of the monarch that they should all acknowledge the Presbyterian discipline, and be received into the bosom of the Presbyterian Church. His tolerant principles led him to wish this. Policy dictated the same thing. If these men became the recipients of his bounty, they would become the supporters of his government; if they were driven to dissent and reduced to starvation, they would continue to plot for the return of the Stewarts. The majority of the Episcopal clergy refused to take the Oath of Allegiance;

some of them continued to pray for King James; the whole body were disaffected; yet William winked at this, and importuned Assembly after Assembly to assume into the Church as many as made their submission.

At first the commissions and presbyteries of the Church looked as if they were resolved to root out every Episcopal incumbent as a cumberer of the ground, and thus completely clear the field. But in time they grew weary of ecclesiastical slaughter, and showed a disposition to comply with the merciful intentions of the king. A considerable number of the Episcopal clergy were recognised by the Revolution Church. According to act of parliament, those who took the oaths to government, and submitted to the Presbyterian polity, were not only protected in their livings, but admitted to the judicatories of the Church. Many who refused to do this were still allowed to continue in their manses and pulpits.

The truth is, in some districts of the country it was no easy matter to dispossess the Episcopal incumbents. The people had become attached to them, and would not allow them to be turned out of their churches to make way for an intruder; or powerful patrons threw over them the broad shield of their authority, and defied the presbyteries. There were cases of ministers who had been expelled from their churches returning; and other cases in which serious riots took place when the presbyteries attempted to force Presbyterian pastors upon reluctant and reclaiming Episcopal congregations. The Assembly thought it right to represent these things to the government, and new acts of parliament were the result.*

Some districts of the country were almost entirely Presbyterian; others almost entirely Episcopalian. In some places there was a division of sentiment, and in these not unfrequently a compromise was made. Thus, in the Collegiate Church of Dunfermline, an Episcopal minister conducted the services during one part of the day, a Presbyterian during the other, and either had his own congregation. It was the

* See Acts of Assembly, p. 243—Act anent Intrusion upon Kirks. Also Acts of Parliament, Will. III., parl. i. sect. v. chapters xxii. and xxvii.

same in the Collegiate Church of Haddington. In Muthill the Episcopal curate maintained his place for nearly twenty years after the Revolution; and the first Presbyterian minister, who is reputed, according to the tradition of the country, to have been chosen as much for his physical strength as his spiritual graces, that so he might hold his own, was compelled for a time to preach in the churchyard, while the Episcopal divine occupied the church.* In other parishes, so strong was Episcopacy that the Presbyterians were necessitated to assemble in meeting-houses, and leave the Episcopalians in possession of the churches. At the time of the union, eighteen years after the Revolution, there were a hundred and sixty-five Episcopal ministers still within the pale of the Establishment, living in the manses, preaching in the pulpits, and drawing the stipends.† These, however, gradually died out, and men of the Presbyterian stamp were substituted in their stead.

Notwithstanding the number of Episcopal ministers retained in the Church, there were large districts of the country left destitute of ordinances. The Presbyterian ranks had been sorely thinned by thirty years of persecution and death, and they could not all at once fill up the vacancies themselves had made.‡ This was particularly the case in

* The following minutes of the Presbytery of Auchterarder will show the difficulty they encountered in getting possession of the church:—

"At Auchterarder, Nov. 9, 1703, Mr Mitchell reports that he went and preached at Muthill as appointed, and required the keys and access to the kirk, but was denied in both, and that thereupon he took instruments in a clerk's hands, which the Presbytery considering, they do appoint Mr Murray to go to Edinburgh this week, and to represent this affair to her Majesty's Advocate."

"At Auchterarder, Feb. 1, 1704, Mr Hepburn and Mr Brough report that they went to Perth as appointed, and showed to the sheriff-depute that it was the Duke of Athole's and her Majesty's Advocate's advice, that the Presbytery should require him to procure unto them the keys of the Kirk of Muthill, or, if he refused, to instrument him; and that he desired a delay for a fortnight till he should get a return from the Duke of Athole hereanent," &c.

† De Foe's Memoirs of the Church of Scotland, p. 345. See also the Introduction to the Leven and Melville Papers. The General Assembly, in an address to Queen Anne, say generally, that they had assumed hundreds of the Episcopal clergy. See Acts of Assembly.

‡ Skinner says, "That in the two Presbyteries of Haddington and Dunbar, where there are near thirty parishes, there were but two Presbyterian ministers,

the district to the north of the Tay, which was in danger of lapsing into heathenism; and therefore the General Assembly saw the necessity of making great efforts to save it. Deputations of southern ministers were appointed to proceed to the north, and act the part of evangelists in those parishes which were either very Episcopal or very destitute. The southern brethren regarded this mission as we would now regard a mission to the backwoods of Canada. Some went cheerfully, but others begged to be excused, and others did not go at all. The Assembly was not slack in censuring the refractory. It went farther. It resolved that twenty-two ministers from the south should be permanently settled in the north, to relieve its darkness. For twelve or fifteen years after the Revolution, a considerable part of every Assembly's time was occupied with such arrangements; and it must be confessed, that if the Church was somewhat reckless in making vacancies, it was indefatigable in filling them up.

The Assembly which met in the beginning of 1696 passed an act against the atheistical opinions of the Deists,* which received a melancholy comment in an occurrence which took place during the same year. A student of eighteen, named Thomas Aikenhead, had unfortunately imbibed infidel opinions, and he had been imprudent enough to spout these to some of his companions. Trinity in unity, he said, was a contradiction; Moses had learned magic in Egypt, and this was the secret of his miracles; Ezra was the author of the Pentateuch; *Theanthropos* was as great an absurdity as *Hirco-Cervus*, or a quadrature to a rotundum. These sceptical commonplaces reached the ears of the authorities, and the youth was indicted under an old statute, which made it a capital crime to curse the Supreme Being. He was convicted, and sentenced to be hanged. It was in vain that the

and the same number in Dunse and Chirnside, of the same extent. In the Presbytery of Auchterarder there were but one, and when the next Presbytery was added to it they made only three. At the same time two of their lay elders declared, in the face of the meeting, that for twenty miles west of Perth there were but two or three Presbyterian ministers to be met with." See Ecclesiastical History, vol. ii. p. 558.

* Acts of Assembly, p. 253.

poor lad, with death before his eyes, recanted his errors, and begged for his life. Even a reprieve for a few days was denied him; and the clergy of the city, forgetful that their Great Master was ever ready to pardon the penitent, gave their voice for his death. He died with the Bible in his hand, in token of his change of mind.* It is a painful incident in the history of intolerance, but it is the last of the kind which happened in our country. No man has since been called to die for his faith.

In the autumn of the same year the parliament met, and, amongst many other acts, passed one for settling of schools. We have already traced so far the origin of our parochial school system. We have seen the "First Book of Discipline" claiming that a school should be planted in every parish, and endowed out of the patrimony of the Church. We have seen the parliament in 1633 ordaining that the bishops should have the power to found a school in every parish where the consent of the heritors and parishioners could be obtained, and to lay an assessment upon land for the maintenance of the master. This act, not being imperative, was only partly operative, and there is reason to dread that education was too much neglected in the troublous times that followed. In 1646, while the civil war was raging, the parliament passed an act which anticipated the legislation of 1696; but it was repealed at the time of the Restoration. Scotland, even at the time of the Revolution, could not yet boast that every parish had a school. The parliament now gave to the country the school system which the Church, ever since the Reformation, had been aiming at, and which the country now enjoys. It made it imperative upon the heritors of every parish to found a school, and to provide a house and salary for the schoolmaster.† The Assembly followed it up by an act enjoining presbyteries to see that the law was obeyed. The effect was soon seen in the wide dif-

* Lord Macaulay's History, vol. vi. Burton's History, vol. i. pp. 256, 257. Attempts have been made to deny this unfortunate fact, but the evidence upon which it rests is too strong to be got rid of. Perhaps, however, it may be said with truth that Macaulay's colouring is too strong.

† Will. III., parl. i. sect. vi. chap. xxvi.

fusion of knowledge. The poorest peasant had it in his power to give a liberal education to his son, and men began to emerge from humble life—to issue from the parish school, whose proud destiny it was to enlarge the boundaries of science, or to charm the world with the sweetness of their song.

The Assembly which met in 1697 passed an act generally known as the Barrier Act—a wise piece of legislation, which has preserved its vitality to our own day. It provides, that before any act be passed, which is to be binding upon the whole Church, it be first proposed to the Assembly as an overture, and, being approved by it, receive afterwards the sanction of a majority of the presbyteries.* Almost every legislative body is the better of a drag to prevent hasty legislation, and this is especially the case with a body so multitudinous, so fluctuating, and so untrained to legislative duties as the General Assembly. But under the Barrier Act rash legislation is impossible. Every overture must first be canvassed on the floor of the General Assembly. Being approved of there, it must be canvassed on the floor of every presbytery throughout the kingdom; and only on receiving the approbation of a majority of these, and after the lapse of a year, can it become law. In some cases the Barrier Act may have rendered legislation unnecessarily slow, but upon the whole its operation has been beneficial. The acts of the Assembly are much more defensible than its decisions.

It was at this period a proposal was made to remove the University of St Andrews to Perth. After the Reformation St Andrews had gradually declined, and from being one of the first towns in the kingdom, had sunk into a paltry fishing village. From the same cause, Glasgow, notwithstanding its greater commercial advantages, had for a little shown symptoms of decay, and it is curious to find the citizens of a city which owes so much of its present prosperity to the Reformation, shortly after that event, declaring that their trade was languishing and their finest buildings going to ruin because the town was no longer the resort of

* Acts of Assembly, p. 260.

bishops, deans, and parsons. The Reformation, in fact, had caused such a change in all the Episcopal cities, as railways have caused in all the hostelries which lie along the old post-roads. A few parting rays of Episcopal splendour were shed upon the venerable city of St Andrews during the reigns of Charles and James, but now the glory was for ever gone; and the masters of the university resolved to strike their tent, and to pitch it elsewhere in greener pastures.

The first step was a politic one. The Earl of Tullibardine, principal Secretary of State for Scotland, was made Chancellor of the University, and thus his friendly offices were secured. The opinion of counsel was next taken; and the Lord Advocate, the Solicitor-General, and the Commissar, declared that the king might, by a charter under the great seal, sanction the translation. Precedents were next sought; and it was discovered that the University of Oxford had on one occasion removed to Northampton, on another occasion to Stamford, although it had re-sought its ancient abodes; and that the University of Prague had wandered to Leipsic. The ingenuity of the professors was next taxed to discover reasons of expediency for the change, and a paper was drawn out in which these were set forth. St Andrews was in a corner of the kingdom, Perth in the very centre of it. At St Andrews all kind of meats and drinks were exorbitantly dear; the masters were obliged to send to Edinburgh for their hats, shoes, and other articles of apparel; the water which they were compelled to drink came from the pipe where all the dirty clothes and split herring of the town were washed, and was accordingly disagreeable to their academic tastes; the once celebrated city, which bore the name of the patron saint of the kingdom, had become a nasty village, with dunghills thickly planted along the streets, redolent of fish-guts, haunted by dysentery, and enveloped in a circumambient atmosphere, so thin and piercing that nitre grew upon the interior walls of the houses; and aged men who came to reside in it were suddenly cut off. The masters farther represented the inhabitants as a Bæotian kind of people. They were inclined to engage in

riots with the students; in the year 1690 they had chased them within their colleges, and brought up their cannons to the very gates, threatening to blow them down; a burgher had drawn his "whinger" at a doctor, and looked as if he would murder him; and in revenge of all this, the ingenuous youths of the university would have burned down the town, if a particular providence had not prevented. Moreover, never had a burgess of St Andrews devoted a farthing to the university; never had a burgess of St Andrews been capable of winning his bread by learning but one, and that was their present bibliothec; and never had the place shown itself sensible of the blessing of having such a seat of science in the midst of it. Perth, on the other hand, held out a brighter prospect of honour and usefulness; of cheaper food and purer water; and moreover, from its situation on the borders of the Highlands, the rays of learning emitted by the university might penetrate among the Celts and help to civilize them.

All this was laid before the Earl of Tullibardine, and he promised to use his influence to procure the king's sanction so soon as the university could effect an arrangement with the magistrates of Perth. To this end negotiations were instantly set on foot; and the bailies of St Johnstone showed an enlightened anxiety to welcome the learned corporation to their fair city. The university asked that all their chartered privileges should be preserved, and buildings, at least equal in extent to those they had at St Andrews, furnished them in Perth. The magistrates offered certain tenements which they possessed in the Spigate Port, and twenty thousand merks to convert them into collegiate buildings; but this was regarded as insufficient. They next offered to furnish for the Divinity College "twenty convenient, fashionable rooms, with kitchen, cellars, larders, brew-house, gardens double-dyked, and other apertinents necessary." For a Philosophy College they undertook to provide "sixty convenient rooms for students, some of them for noblemen's sons, some for gentlemen's sons, and the rest for men's sons of ordinary quality, with convenient schools, kitchens, cellars, larders, brew-houses, and other office-houses necessary, with

a double-dyked garden, summer-house, houses of office, and a convenient church for the whole university." In regard to the remaining college, the magistrates were willing to furnish ground for the buildings, and to concur with the Master of the University in petitioning government for pecuniary assistance to rear them; and, moreover, to agitate the whole country for subscriptions.

The university acknowledged with gratitude the offer of the city, but declined to shift their quarters till accommodation was provided for all their three colleges. They, moreover, expressed their unwillingness to concur in any petition to the government for money; and perhaps their reluctance was increased by the fact that they were, at that very time, attempting to drive a bargain for a lease of the archbishopric. They had offered L.1000 sterling a year for nineteen years; but the government fancied they had shortly before made too easy a bargain with the University of Glasgow in a transaction of a similar kind, and were inclined to be more cautious with St Andrews.*

Here the negotiations came to an end. In the month of June 1698, a few weeks after the time we speak of, the Earl of Tullibardine resigned the seals, and joined the opposition. It was perhaps felt that the affair could not be managed without his influence, and so it came to nought. But it is doubtful if even his influence could have accomplished it, for the project was not long talked of till Secretary Ogilvy wrote to Carstares—"I think nothing should be done in this rashly; for our history gives no instance of anything of this kind, and the university being settled by virtue of charters and ratifications of parliament, my first thought of this is, that there can be no translation without the consent of parliament, especially seeing the adjacent country and shire of Fife are concerned."† At the same time a panic had

* My narrative of this matter has been taken from a MS. belonging to the Antiquarian Society of Perth, entitled, "Papers relative to a projected Translation of the University of St Andrew to the town of Perth, in the years 1697 and 1698, copied from the Records of the University," &c., under the inspection of John Lee, Rector, February 27, 1818. I believe this MS. has been printed in the Transactions of the Perth Antiquarian Society.

† Carstares's State Papers, p. 342.

arisen among the inhabitants of Perth, that the influx of so many hungry students as the university would bring would raise the price of provisions in their town, and they were not disposed to hail the advent of learning if it were to be accompanied by famine. But though Fife was allowed to retain her ancient university, the story we have told is curious in itself, and throws some light upon collegiate life at the close of the seventeenth century.

A.D. 1698. In perusing the legislation of the parliament which assembled in 1698, we stumble upon an act entitled, "An Act for preventing of Disorders in the Supplying and Planting of Vacant Churches."* It is sometimes spoken of by the shorter and more significant name of the Rabbling Act. The truth must be told. The attempt to settle Presbyterian ministers in several districts of the country had caused serious riots. The Episcopalians rabbled the Presbyterians in the north as the Presbyterians had rabbled the Episcopalians in the south, and the legislature was compelled to interfere. The dominant Presbyters of course cried out loudly against the obstinacy of the Episcopal ministers in clinging to their manses, and the obstinacy of the Episcopal people in clinging to their ministers; but surely in this they were not more reasonable than the fish-woman who curses the eel for wriggling while she skins it.

Though Presbyterianism had been established, it was not quite happy in its establishment. Many of the ministers were ill at ease in regard to the terms upon which they had been raised to place and power. Presbytery had been established simply as being agreeable to the inclinations of the people, not as possessing a Divine right. Such low ground was very offensive to the high notions which still lingered in many Presbyterian bosoms. This uneasiness was increased by the disputes which had taken place with the king in regard to the meeting of Assemblies. William had adjourned one Assembly without naming a day for another; and he had, on several occasions, put off the day of meeting from time to time solely upon his own kingly authority.

* Will. III., parl. i. sect. v. chap. 22.

The ministers were annoyed and irritated by this; and we need not wonder that they were. Thus, in July 1695, the Assembly was to meet in Edinburgh, and already a considerable number of ministers had arrived in town, when an order came down from headquarters forbidding it to sit. The ministers who had come jogging upon their horses, over rough roads, from every corner of Scotland, were indignant at this treatment, and some of them talked of addressing his Majesty upon the ill-usage they had received; but the majority resolved to content themselves with laying the grievance before the secretary, and urging that such a thing should not happen again. But it was not the long journey that pained them most; it was the triumph which had been given to their adversaries; it was the ground which had been given for the reproach of Erastianism. "It was a pity," wrote one of them to Carstares, "to see the ministers flocking in from all parts, and, in the meantime, their adversaries flouting at them for having lost their labour; and yet more pity to hear the poor ministers saying they durst not go home to their congregations, especially to the south-west parts, where Mr Hepburn will triumph over them for what he will call their unfaithfulness, and will be in a ready way to draw away people from hearing them."*

This sore place in the Established Church was kept from healing by the Cameronians, who published several Declarations, minutely setting forth the defections of the times, and pronouncing the Church to be thoroughly Erastian. Vexed by these reproaches, some of the ministers were anxious that the General Assembly should pass an act assertory of the Church's intrinsic powers, and that "its government did not rest upon so slippery a foundation as the inclinations of the people." Others counselled that these things should merely be declared from the pulpit, and proved by texts from Scripture. Carstares's opinion was asked; but Carstares was too cautious a man to advise any such courses.† But it was expedient that the scruples of many should be quieted; and, accordingly, the Commission of the Assembly in 1698 published "A Seasonable Admoni-

* Carstares's State Papers, p. 255. † Ibid. pp. 364–66.

tion," in which they declared—"We do believe and own that Jesus Christ is the only Head and King of His Church, and that He hath instituted in His Church officers and ordinances, order and government, and not left it to the will of man, magistrate, or Church to alter at their pleasure. And we believe that this government is neither Prelatical nor Congregational, but Presbyterian, which now, through the mercy of God, is established among us; and we believe we have a better foundation for this our Church government than the inclinations of the people or the laws of men."

Ever since the Reformation the Scotch mind, unoccupied otherwise, had been greatly occupied with religious controversies; but it was now suddenly turned in a different direction. Golden dreams of commercial greatness and unbounded wealth began to rise up before it. The excitement of the Covenant gave way to an excitement more intoxicating still; and the nation plunged into its first great mercantile undertaking with the same eagerness with which the inexperienced traveller pursues the mirage of the desert.

William Paterson, who is said by some to have led in his youth the roving life of a buccaneer, had thrown out some hints which led to the foundation of the Bank of England. Debarred by national jealousy from reaping the fruit of his grand idea, he now laid before his native country an idea grander still. A portion of the Isthmus of Darien was still unappropriated by the Spaniards. Paterson had formed the plan of founding on either shore of it an emporium for the merchandise of the Eastern and Western Worlds. He conceived that a link might thus be formed to connect the trade of Europe and Asia; and that both the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans might be ploughed by vessels from every quarter of the globe, directing their prows to the narrow neck of land which divided them, and enriching the Scotch colonists, who, by occupying the Isthmus, would hold in their hands the keys of the world.

The Scottish Parliament passed an act establishing a trading company to Africa and the Indies, with very plenary powers, and the king gave it his consent. But as soon as it became known what the exact project of this company was,

the jealousy of the English and Dutch merchants and the hostility of the Spanish government were aroused, and threatened to ruin it before it was organized. Nothing, however, could damp the ardour of the Scots, panting for wealth. Four hundred thousand pounds were subscribed. Five large frigates were purchased, and freighted with a rich cargo of merchandise, besides twelve hundred emigrants to form the new colony. The Church sent four ministers, one of whom was Alexander Shields, to keep alive amongst them the religion of their fatherland.* The voyage was prosperous; the emigrants disembarked; a fort and a town were built; and for a few months all went well. But in a little, the effects of a noxious climate began to be felt; the new colonists were attacked by the Spaniards; they were left to perish by the English; proclamations were published at Jamaica, Barbadoes, and the other American plantations, forbidding any one to stretch out to them a helping hand; and after a hopeless struggle against such adverse circumstances, they were compelled to abandon the colony in despair. Of the many hundreds who set out upon that expedition, so full of high hope, very few revisited their native land.†

The country was now plunged in distress. Many families were utterly ruined, for they had embarked their all: many others had lost what was dearer to them than gold—a husband, a brother, a son. The Assembly in 1700, and again in 1701, proclaimed a fast, with a special reference to the calamity which had befallen the country in the failure of the enterprise.‡ The parliament passed a series of acts condemnatory of the treatment the colony had received at the hands of the English government; and the strongest ani-

* The Assembly of 1700 directed a pastoral letter to Alexander Shields, Francis Boreland, Archibald Stobo, and Alexander Dalgliesh—the ministers who had sailed with the first Darien expedition; and instructed its commission "to supply with good and able ministers the ships and colonies of the African and Indian Company, as they should be applied to by the court of directors from time to time." See Acts of Assembly, pp. 291–98.

† Collection of State Tracts, published during the reign of William III. —A Defence of the Scots Settlement at Darien, vol. ii. Laing's History, &c.

‡ Acts of Assembly, pp. 290–305.

mosity was felt toward the king, who was thought to have sacrificed his Scotch to his English and Dutch subjects, and to the continental policy he was then so intently pursuing, which led him to propitiate Spain.

It was the first of the many bubbles our country has seen; the first great mercantile enterprise in which it engaged; and the first severe lesson in mercantile disaster it received. Yet the project was a magnificent one. Alexander the Great had reared in Egypt an emporium for the trade of Europe and the East, and it had flourished mightily; but Alexandria was not better placed for the commerce of the old world than Darien for the commerce of a world enlarged by the discoveries of Columbus. Egypt is at this hour the connecting link between England and India; and the day does not seem far distant when a large proportion of the traffic of the world will be borne across the Isthmus of Panama.

While the success of the Darien expedition was yet doubtful, Fletcher of Saltoun published a book, in which he calculated that there were two hundred thousand beggars strolling about the country; and, notwithstanding his republican politics, seriously proposed domestic servitude as a remedy for this wide-spread pauperism.* By the failure of the enterprise, Scotland seemed to be doomed to continue in this state of poverty for ever, with no sources of wealth beyond her own sterile hills. But though her first effort to reap in foreign fields was calamitous, the vision of commercial prosperity was never afterwards allowed to fade from her view; and the result is now to be seen in the crowd of masts which tower in the docks of Greenock, and along the far-stretching wharfs of the Broomielaw. The rise of the mercantile spirit was the decline of the polemical. Men had now something else to think of than Covenants and Testimonies. During the eighteenth century, the Church occupies a much less important place in history than it had done during the seventeenth. But it would be wrong to infer from this that

* Fletcher's estimate must be grossly exaggerated, as the whole population of the country at this period was less than a million; but still there can be no doubt of the wide-spread pauperism that prevailed.

religion had decayed; for her proper abode is the heart and the homestead, the closet and the sanctuary, and not the high places of the field.

Although controversy had raged in the Scottish Church ever since the days of Knox and Melville, it had seldom turned upon matters of faith. The ecclesiastical mind was so thoroughly absorbed with points of discipline as to have no space for points of doctrine. The throne of Calvin was so firmly fixed that few ventured to shake it. This is true of Scotland at the present hour. The Church has been torn into shreds by dissent; but every great dissent has originated in disputes about its government, and not its doctrines. There have been small schisms upon matters of faith, but they have uniformly died out, showing that they were not native to the soil, while the others have taken root and flourished vigorously. Scotland has ever been sternly orthodox; and, with many sects, it has but one creed. The eighteenth century, however, opened upon a heresy which threatened to trouble the Church.

Every minister of the Church, before being ordained, is required to disown all Popish, Arian, Socinian, Arminian, and Bourignian errors. In the first four of these heresies every one is perfectly instructed; but we do no great wrong to our ministers by supposing that many of them have solemnly renounced Bourignianism without exactly knowing what Bourignianism is.

M. Antonia Bourignion was born at Lisle during the latter half of the seventeenth century, and educated in the faith of the Roman Church. In 1696, laying claim to inspiration, she published a book full of extravagant and mystical notions. She denied the need of a priesthood—the need of sacraments. In some respects she approximated closely to the Quakers and Quietists, but she held some notions which they would repudiate. Her heresy began to spread in the Low Countries, and her book was translated into English. Dr Garden, one of the ministers of Aberdeen, was captivated by what he conceived to be its loving and catholic spirit, and published "An Apology for M. Antonia Bourignion." For this he was cited before the Assembly of

1701. He did not compear; but he had already, without acknowledging himself to be the author of the Apology, confessed before the commission his conviction that the writings of Antonia Bourignion contained the essence of the Christian religion; that they inculcated a Christian temper with more force than any writings of the age; that they tended to unite Christians in their differences, and to promote the gospel of Jesus Christ; and that her peculiar sentiments ought not to be accounted heresies, as they contradicted no one article of the Christian faith. He had, moreover, declared, that he counted himself honoured in being singled out for owning such principles.

The General Assembly, however, found that the writings of Bourignion denied the divine permission of sin, and the infliction of damnation for it; that they ascribed a twofold human nature to Christ; that they repudiated the decrees of election and reprobation; that they taught there was an evil spirit in the souls of men before they were born; that their will was unlimited; that there was in them something that was infinite, by which they would be united to God; that the Divine prescience was not complete; that Christ's human nature was corrupt; that there was perfection in this world, a state of purification in the world to come, and generation in heaven. The writings of this female fanatic were accordingly condemned, and her disciple, Dr George Garden, was deposed.* The heresy spread amongst a few, and lingered for some years in the country; but it is long ago dead and forgotten.

The life of King William was now drawing to a close. He had been delicate from the cradle. When a young man he had had a severe attack of small-pox, which had left their pits upon his face, and their debilitating effects in his constitution. He was asthmatic, had a dry quick cough, and could not subsist in the close atmosphere of St James's.

* Acts of Assembly, pp. 306–8. The only work of Antonia Bourignion which I have been able to consult is entitled—"The Renovation of the Gospel Spirit, in three parts, showing the Universal Apostacy of Mankind from the Spirit and Life of our Lord Jesus Christ, with the sure and infallible means of retrieving it. Done out of the French. To which is prefixed a Preface to the English Reader." Published at London in 1707.

Yet he had outlived many who had much fairer prospects of long life. Eight years ago he had laid his queen in the grave—the good, the gentle, the loving Mary. She was but thirty-two when she died. His father-in-law, though well up in years, was strong and robust. Since his flight from the country he had solaced himself with a devotion almost monastic, which had made even his co-religionists laugh at him, as a man who had thrown away three kingdoms for a mass. But amidst his austerities and prayers, he had been looking forward to the day when the death of his sickly son-in-law would re-open a way for him to the throne. But the weakly son-in-law survived the vigorous father-in-law. In the year 1701 King James had died.

Toward the end of February 1702, William had a fall from his horse, by which his collar-bone was broken. The bone was set, and at first he did not seem to have suffered from the accident; but a few days afterwards he fell into an aguish fever. His difficulty of breathing increased, his pulse rapidly sunk, and on the 8th of March he expired.

The General Assembly was sitting while the king was dying. They had already drawn up their answer to his usual letter, when news of his serious illness reached Edinburgh. A new clause was added. "But while we are despatching this return," said the assembled divines, "we have the surprising and most affecting news of your Majesty's dangerous condition, by reason of sickness, which not only prevents the design we had of an humble address of duty and affection to your Majesty, but obliges us to betake ourselves wholly to most earnest supplication to God for your Majesty's preservation."* This was dated on the 11th of March—three days after his Majesty had died.

King William is described as having a slender and awkward figure; but his brow was large, his nose was aquiline, his eyes were piercing, and there was not only a seriousness, but a solemnity in the expression of his face. He had great qualities—coolness in danger, intrepidity in battle, comprehensiveness of view. He had a power of forming coalitions out of the most hostile elements which has never been sur-

* Acts of Assembly, p. 314.

passed. Private friends he had few, but those he had were deeply attached to him; and love, to be deep, must be mutual. He has been blamed for violating, and teaching his wife to violate, the sanctities of filial affection; but most people will agree that the interests of a great nation were before the claims of one tyrannical old man. It is certain that neither William nor Mary sought the life of James; they merely wished to take from his hand a sceptre which both his religious faith and his political principles unfitted him to wield.

Whatever may be thought of William's motives, it is certain he was the saviour of the country. But though this was generally acknowledged, he never became a favourite with the people. He was a foreigner. He was phlegmatic and studiously silent. It was evident he took no pains to ingratiate himself with any one. He was seldom seen, and when he gave an audience he had scarcely a word to say. The nobles remembered the gracious manners of Charles, and forgot his profligacy; the Scotch Presbyterians, for a time at least, were so annoyed that William would not allow them to persecute the Prelatists, that they ceased to remember how, till he came, the Prelatists had been hounded on to persecute them. Posterity is more just. William's dry manners are not thought to detract seriously from his great virtues; and the tolerance he preached to the Scotch Church in letters, and imposed upon it by acts of parliament, now shines as one of the brightest jewels in his crown.

The Assembly of 1702 was brought to a close by the king's death; but a few days afterwards the commission forwarded an address to Queen Anne, upon her accession to the throne. They tendered to her Majesty their hearty thanks for the assurance she had given the Privy Council that she would preserve the laws, liberties, and religion of the kingdom; and they declared in return that they acknowledged her Majesty's most just title to the crown, and would maintain the same to the utmost of their power against all pretenders.*

Queen Anne was firmly attached to the Church of England;

* Acts of Assembly, pp. 315, 316.

she had not the stoical indifference to forms of Church government which had distinguished William, and the Scotch Episcopalians began to entertain hopes that she might be inclined to favour them. Toward the end of the year they approached her by petition. They begged that they might be admitted to benefices where a majority of the heritors and inhabitants were of the Episcopal persuasion, and remarked, that the Presbyterians could not object to this proposal, for if they had such a plurality of the people as they pretended, their benefices were in no hazard.* No attention appears to have been paid to this petition, and next year they petitioned again in more piteous terms, not asking specially to be admitted to benefices, but that the queen, in her matchless clemency, would compassionate their starving condition. "In truth and gratitude," said they, "we are obliged to acknowledge, that many of us in a great measure owe our lives to the charity and beneficence of such of your Majesty's good subjects as thought it a disgrace to Christianity that a society of men consecrated to the altar, in the service of Christ, should perish in a Christian kingdom for want of bread."† The queen kindly assured them of her protection, said she would relieve their necessities as far as she could, and recommended them to live in peace and Christian love with the Presbyterian clergy.

The parliament generally dies with the monarch; but in consequence of the troubled state of the country, arising from the disputed succession, it had been resolved that the parliament which was in being at William's death should continue in existence for six months afterwards. Accordingly, the Estates assembled at Edinburgh on the 9th of June. But some entertained grave objections to its proceeding to business. It had originally met as a Convention; it had been metamorphosed into a parliament; it had lasted during the whole preceding reign; and now that Anne was quietly settled on the throne, there was no good reason why its existence should be protracted—it should die in peace. The Duke of Hamilton laid before the

* Stephen's Ecclesiastical History, vol. iii. p. 641. Skinner's History.

† Skinner's History, vol. ii. p. 601. Stephen's History, vol. iii. p. 643.

Estates a paper in which these and other reasons were stated against their continuance; but the majority, tenacious of their parliamentary life, resolved to proceed to business. The Duke of Hamilton and seventy-four followers seceded. The Duke of Queensberry, supported by a hundred and twelve members, continued to sit. They voted themselves a free and legal parliament, passed an act recognising the queen's authority, and another securing the Presbyterian government of the Church in stronger terms than it had hitherto been done. They declared it to be agreeable to the Word of God, and the only government of Christ's Church within the kingdom. Burnet says, that when they were proceeding to ratify all the former acts in favour of Presbyterian government, Sir Alexander Bruce moved that these should be read, peradventure some of them might be found inconsistent with monarchy, and that for this he was expelled the House.*

A.D. 1703. On the 10th of March 1703 the General Assembly met, and the Earl of Seafield, Lord High Chancellor of the Kingdom, as Royal Commissioner, presented a letter from the queen, in which she said—"We renew the assurance given by us for protection of the Presbyterian government, as that which we find acceptable to the inclinations of our people, and established by the laws of the kingdom. We are confident that you will act in this Assembly so as we shall have new reasons to be satisfied with you and your conduct; and that you will carry so with others of the reformed Protestant religion, albeit differing from you in forms of Church polity, that by your meekness and charity they may be the more inclined to live peaceably and dutifully under us, and in brotherly love and respect toward you and the Established Church." The Assembly replied in courteous terms, but with a slight demur at the royal sentiments. They afterwards voted an address, in which they spoke out more plainly. They informed her Majesty that Presbytery was agreeable to the Word of God and the only government of Christ's Church in the kingdom, and they complained that the Episcopal ministers trangressed

* Burnet's History, vol. iii. p. 353.

the law of the land by preaching, by despising sentences of deprivation, by invading settled churches, by intruding into vacant churches, by baptizing and marrying in a clandestine way.* In short, the Episcopalians were doing precisely what the Presbyterians had ventured to do when they were a persecuted remnant. Then the Episcopalians complained of the Presbyterians; now the Presbyterians complained of the Episcopalians. The Assembly was about to proceed farther, gathering courage from success. They had prepared the draft of an act for asserting the supremacy of Christ, the intrinsic power of the Church, and the divine right of Presbytery, when the Commissioner interfered, and abruptly dissolved them.†

The country was now agitated with the elections for the new parliament; and notwithstanding the exertions of the Presbyterians, a considerable number of Jacobites were returned. It met on the sixth of May. The Duke of Queensberry, one of the most consummate politicians of the time, appeared as her Majesty's representative, and seeing a strong body of Jacobites arrayed against the government, he strove to strengthen his party by conciliating the Presbyterians. All the laws in favour of Presbytery were ratified; and more, it was declared treason to utter a syllable against the Claim of Right.‡ The Earl of Strathmore brought in a bill for the toleration of all Dissenters in the exercise of their religious worship. The commission of the Church met it by a remonstrance, in which they argued that there was no need of a toleration, as the Episcopalians had few scruples of conscience touching communion with the Established Church; that difference of opinion about Church government was not sufficient reason for division in worship; and that the toleration of Episcopacy would endanger the establishment of Presbytery.§ In consequence of this remonstrance the bill was thrown out.

The Church now began to open its eyes to a fact which had escaped its observation during the conflicts—the triumphs

* Acts of Assembly, pp. 316, 317, 321.

† Testimony of the United Associate Synod, p. 39. Willison's Testimony, p. 31. Stephen's History, vol. iii. p. 646.

‡ Anne, parl. i. sect. i. chapters ii. iii.

§ Stephen's History, vol. iii. pp. 649, 650.

and defeats of the last century. There were considerable districts of the country upon which the Reformation had never dawned. There were glens in the Highlands where Popish and even Pagan rites were still practised; there were isles amid the Hebrides which had never been trodden by a Protestant missionary. The Assembly addressed itself to the subject with praiseworthy alacrity. It passed acts for the distribution among the Gaels of Gaelic Bibles, Gaelic Psalm-Books, Gaelic catechisms. It passed acts to promote the establishment of libraries and schools in Highland districts. It held out large encouragement to young men having the Gaelic tongue to study for the ministry. It sent deputations to visit the most benighted districts. It ordered presbyteries to make returns of all the Papists living within their bounds.

In consequence of this, reports were sent in from a considerable number of presbyteries, which bring out the fact, that while in some districts of the country Popery had been clean blotted out, in others, more remote from central influences, it remained almost entire. In the county of Selkirk there was not one Papist. In Athole there was only one, and he a blind fiddler. But in South Uist and Barra, out of fifteen hundred examinable persons, only seventeen were Protestants. In the islands of Canna, Rum, and Muck, out of five hundred examinable persons, only about forty were Protestants. In Knoydart and Morar, out of seven hundred, all were Popish but four. In Arisaig, Moydart, and Glengarry, there was a population of fifteen hundred, and all were Papists but one man. In these districts there was no distinction between Saturday and Sabbath; the thick darkness of a state not much above heathenism was unbroken.*

These facts made every lover of his country bestir himself. In 1707 the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge began to take form under the fostering care of the Church. Two years later it was established by the queen's letters patent. In 1712 it reported to the Assembly that it had collected L.4400 sterling, and was ready to establish eleven schools.† In 1719 it reported that its funds had

* Maitland, Miscellany, vol. iv. † Acts of Assembly, p. 463.

swollen to L.7000, and that it was in a position to maintain forty-two schools.* Six years afterwards George I. signified his intention of giving L.1000 annually to maintain preachers and catechists in the destitute districts of the Highlands and Islands; and this Royal Bounty has been continued by all his successors on the throne.

Still these efforts were not quite successful in rooting out Romanism. In 1720 the Presbytery of Lorn represented to the General Assembly that three populous districts in Ardnamurchan had never been reformed from Popery; that the number of examinable persons was seven hundred; and that only one family was Protestant. In 1722 it was reported that in Kilmonivaig a hundred and fifty persons had recently apostatized to Popery; and that in Glengarry, a pendicle of that parish, where there were five hundred souls, the Reformation had never taken place at all. At the same time the Presbytery of Dunkeld represented that Kenmore, with a population of six thousand, had never had a Presbyterian minister since the Revolution—a period of thirty-four years; and, stranger still, that in the whole tract stretching from Dull to Inverary, there was not one Presbyterian minister to be found.†

The preachers, catechists, and schoolmasters continued to toil on, but the evil continued not much abated. In Kilmonivaig, in 1760, out of two thousand five hundred examinable persons, sixteen hundred were still Papists; but here we need not wonder that it was so, for there was no church, no manse, no glebe, no school. In other districts not more than a tenth of the population was Protestant.‡ If we descend to the time when the "Original Statistical Account of Scotland" was published, we shall find the same faith pertinaciously abiding in its old haunts. In Barra, out of a population of sixteen hundred, only eighty were Protestants.§ In South Uist, out of three thousand four hundred

* Acts of Assembly, p. 527.

† Maitland, Miscellany, vol. iv. ‡ Ibid.

§ Original Statistical Account, vol. xiii. p. 332. In Barra there was no church. It was thought unnecessary to put the heritors to the expense of building one for such a handful of Protestants.

and fifty, only five hundred were Protestants.* In the Small Isles, including Eigg, Rum, Canna, and Muck, eight hundred were Protestants; five hundred and forty were of the ancient faith.† In Kilmonivaig, a population of three thousand was nearly equally divided between the old religion and the new.‡ Protestantism had made some progress, but it had been slow. If we take up a modern almanac, we shall find that Roman priests are still labouring among the mists of Uist, Barra, Arisaig, Glengarry, Knoydart, Morar, and Moydart, and administering the mass to a people who have inherited the faith with the blood of those who lived there a hundred and fifty years ago.

We have here presented the problem which has puzzled philosophers, and of which no perfect solution has yet been found—How should the Reformed religion have at first advanced from victory to victory till the half of Christendom was at its feet? and how should it since have lost its power? Between 1520 and 1570, Protestantism wrested the half of Europe from Rome; between 1570 and the present time, it has scarcely achieved a single conquest. The boundary-line between the Roman and the Protestant States at the close of the sixteenth century is the boundary-line still. In Scotland, some secluded glens and sea-girt islands were overlooked when the work of reformation was going on, and the efforts of five generations have been unable to atone for the neglect. Had some follower of Knox visited them when the land was full of the ferment of the Reformation, and told them how their fellow-countrymen were everywhere throwing their idols to the moles and the bats, there is every likelihood that they would have caught the infection, and done the same. But when the tide was flowing it did not reach them; and when all others were borne along with it, they were left high and dry upon the beach. In the midst of Protestantism they remain Catholic—hereditary representatives of the ancient faith of their country—like mediæval tenements in the midst of a modern city, bringing back the memory of a bygone order of things.

* Original Statistical Account, vol. xiii. p. 298.

† Ibid. vol. xvii. p. 280.

‡ Ibid. vol. xvii. p. 544.

The Treaty of Union with England was now the great subject of anxiety in the country. The parliament which assembled in 1705 had empowered the queen to nominate commissioners to meet with the commissioners of the English parliament, and treat regarding this great subject. As religion was one of the principal causes of uneasiness, they were specially prohibited from giving their consent to any alteration in the worship or discipline of the Established Church.* The commissioners of the two kingdoms shortly afterwards met at the Cockpit, and proceeded to discuss the articles of the treaty.

A complete union between the nations separated by the Tweed was no new thing. Edward I. had carried fire and sword into Scotland to effect it. It was the manner in which unions were managed in his time. Henry VIII. first negotiated for a marriage between his infant son Edward and the infant Mary, who wore the northern crown while yet in her cradle; and when negotiations failed, he resorted to arms. James VI. no sooner ascended the English throne than he set his heart upon a union of the kingdoms. He assumed to himself the title of King of Great Britain. He declared that England and Scotland were names of hostility, and ought to be abolished. His son Charles I. inherited his opinions. The Lord Protector, Oliver Cromwell, effected with a strong hand what many sovereigns had been unable to accomplish. During his reign Scotland and England were one nation, with one parliament; and though the Scotch pride had been wounded, a prosperity unknown before had helped to soothe it. But when Cromwell died, his policy died with him. All these efforts to knit the two nations into one had failed; but at length the fulness of the time was come.

Notwithstanding the many obvious reasons for an incorporating union of the two nations, the popular feeling of Scotland was strongly opposed to it. The people thought it was a surrender of their national independence—a giving up voluntarily of what their fathers had held dearer than life. The Presbyterians dreaded the result upon their Church.

* Anne, parl. i. sect. iii. chap. iv.

They remembered the trials it had come through. They knew the influence of the Episcopal dignitaries, and dreaded that Presbytery would be endangered by a parliament in which so many prelates had a seat. Some of them called to mind the Covenant they had sworn to extirpate Prelacy from both England and Ireland; and how could they now tolerate its mitred representatives in the legislature of the united kingdoms? So strong were these feelings, that while the Treaty was depending, numerous addresses from counties, burghs, and presbyteries were presented against it; the members of parliament who were known to favour it were insulted by the mob in the streets of the metropolis; the Cameronians in the south, and some of the clans in the north, began to muster under experienced captains, and a renewal of convulsions was anticipated.*

It was well that the Church at this period was guided by the counsels of a man so influential and so cautious as Carstares. After the death of his great patron King William, he had accepted the office of Principal of the University of Edinburgh, and soon acquired in the Ecclesiastical Courts the ascendency to which his position, his abilities, and his services were so well entitled.† It was felt that, if the Church put forth her strength to oppose the Union, it must necessarily miscarry. Carstares exerted all his influence to prevent this, and succeeded. A few presbyteries voted addresses couched in language very offensive to the government; but the commission, which had received special instructions to watch over the safety of the Church, instead of presuming to dictate to the parliament, contented itself with presenting a respectful address, begging its attention to the interests of the Established Church.‡

* Somerville's History of the Reign of Queen Anne, pp. 207–32. Laing's History of Scotland, vol. ii.

† The Earl of Seafield, in writing to Mr Carstares about this period, says—"My Lord Portland gave me the honour of a visit this day, and is very well. He asked kindly about you; I told him you governed the Church, the university, and all your old friends here. That you lived with great satisfaction, and was as much his servant as ever." (M'Cormick's Life of Carstares, p. 74.)

‡ Somerville's History, p. 226.

The commissioners for negotiating the Treaty had had many difficulties to contend with, besides those which resulted from the pride and the prejudices of the two kingdoms. Taxes were to be equalized—the number of representatives from either country who were to sit in the imperial parliament was to be fixed—many other delicate details were to be arranged; but at last they brought their labours to a close. Nothing now remained but to get the sanction of the two parliaments.

On the 3d of October 1706, the Scotch parliament met. When it was resolved to proceed with the consideration of the Treaty, the most intense anxiety prevailed in the city. Crowds prowled about the streets, besieged the Parliament-house, poured out their abuse upon the representative of Majesty, and conducted the orators who spoke against the Union in triumph to their lodgings. Such was the threatening aspect of affairs, that the Commissioner and Chancellor had some thoughts of adjourning the parliament, but Lord Stair and Lord Godolphin urged them not to yield to such weakness.*

The Articles of Union agreed upon by the commissioners made no mention of religion. It was a thing too delicate to be handled by them. But now the parliament passed an act for securing the Protestant religion and Presbyterian Church government. By this act it was ordained, that the government of the Church by kirk-sessions, presbyteries, synods, and General Assemblies should continue unalterable, and be the only government of the Church within the kingdom of Scotland. It was provided that this act should be inserted in the Treaty of Union, and form an essential condition of it.†

It was known that a similar security was to be given for the continuance of the English Church within England, and the Scottish parliament, in their ratification of the Articles of Union, inserted a clause giving their consent to this; but the commission of the Assembly, learning what was done, and regarding it as a sinful compliance, petitioned that no pledge should be given for the establishment of a hierarchy

* Laing's History, vol. ii. † Anne, parl. i. sect. iv. chap. vi.

and ceremonies which would involve the nation in guilt. It was an ebullition of the old Covenanting spirit.*

At length, after long and vehement debates, the Articles of Union were agreed upon. It was said that dexterous management and English gold greatly helped the conclusion, but surely we must also attribute it to patriotic feelings, and a sagacity which was able to forecast the future. The Treaty was next carried up to London, to be laid before the English houses of parliament. There an act was inserted for the security of the English Church, very similar to that for the security of the Scottish Church. In the Commons almost no opposition was made to the bill; but in the Lords, four of the bishops took exception at the Scottish Act of Security. Upon this the Archbishop of Canterbury stood up and said, "That he had no scruple in approving of it within the bounds of Scotland; that he thought the narrow notions of all Churches had been their ruin; and that he believed the Church of Scotland to be as true a Protestant Church as the Church of England, though it was not so perfect." It was well and charitably spoken; and several bishops followed in the same strain.†

When the Articles of Union had been agreed to by the English legislature, their exemplification, as it was called, was conveyed back to Scotland, and recorded by the parliament on the 25th of March 1707. This done, the Scottish parliament adjourned to the 22d of April, but in reality to meet no more. When the Chancellor, Lord Seafield, declared the adjournment, he is reported to have said in jest, "There is an end of an old song." But the people were in no jesting mood, and believed that the glory of their country was departed for ever.

* De Foe's History of the Union, p. 480. See also Appendix, p. 625.

† Carstares's State Papers, pp. 759, 760.

CHAPTER IX.

THE General Assembly was now the only legislative body in Scotland, but it did not gain in strength by being left alone. It was like a parasitic plant deprived of the props which gave it support. A great deal of its power resulted from the influence which it could bring to bear upon the Privy Council and the parliament; but the Privy Council was now abolished, and the parliament was merged in the parliament of Great Britain, whose legislative functions were carried on in a region far remote from Scotch ecclesiastical influence.

In the month of April 1707, after the Union had been agreed to by both the Scotch and the English parliaments, but before it had yet come into operation, the General Assembly met. In none of its printed acts is there any specific mention of the great event which was upon the eve of being consummated; but the proceedings of the commission, which had been vigilant in watching the course of affairs, were approved of. Progress was also made in building up the constitution of the Church. "A Form of Process in the Judicatories of the Church, in Relation to Scandals and Censures," was passed into law. It is divided into nine chapters; it minutely details the modes of procedure to be used by the Church Courts in dealing with delinquents, and is in full force at the present day.* The queen had appointed the 1st of May to be observed throughout England as a day of thanksgiving to Almighty God for the Union so

* Acts of Assembly, pp. 404–16.

happily brought about, and was anxious that it should be kept throughout the whole island. But she knew that the Church of Scotland was very jealous of royal interference in such matters, and that the people of Scotland were in no humour to give thanks for what they considered a curse rather than a blessing. She therefore wisely left Scotland to determine for itself what was to be done.* The General Assembly did nothing, but its procedure had been calm and temperate, and of this statesmen were aware. "I am very glad," wrote the Earl of Mar to Carstares, "your Assembly proceeded so calmly, and is now come to so good a conclusion. 'Tis not the first time the Church of Scotland has been obliged to your good counsel. I hope your brethren will now be in good humour, and preach peace to their hearers, and endeavour to undeceive them of the wrong impressions they got of the great affair which is now come to pass. I'm sure it will be their own fault if they live not now in more security than ever."†

In the spring of 1708, the country was alarmed by the prospect of a French invasion for the purpose of restoring the Stewart dynasty. A considerable fleet was collected at Dunkirk, and it was not concealed that Scotland was its destination. On the 12th of March, it appeared off the town of Montrose; and after some communication with the shore, put about, and stood away for the Frith of Forth. Sir George Byng, the English admiral, instantly put out to sea in pursuit, and the French consulted their safety by returning whence they came, without even attempting a landing. While the alarm lasted, the Presbyterians showed themselves actively loyal. They proclaimed a fast; they prepared for defence; and if they increased their severities against the

* "Her Majesty considered the ill impressions that were made of an union of the two kingdoms, by the enemies of both, upon many people there, and some of the clergy; therefore only commanded me to let her desire (of having a general thanksgiving through the whole island) be known, and left it entirely to her servants there to consider of the reasonableness of declaring it; and though she still wishes it could have been, yet her Majesty is far from proposing, much less ordering, what may offend." (Sir David Nairn to Mr Carstares.) State Papers, p. 761.

† State Papers, p. 762.

Episcopalian clergy, it is not to be wondered at, for the Episcopalian clergy were more than suspected of having instigated the invasion.

On the 17th of April, immediately after the dread of the invasion had passed away, the General Assembly met. The Earl of Glasgow occupied the throne as her Majesty's representative, and Principal Carstares was for the second time elevated to the Moderator's chair. The queen, in her letter, assured her "Right Reverend and Well-Beloved" of the satisfaction with which she had beheld their zeal and affection on the appearance of the invasion; and they in return assured her Majesty, with more than usual emphasis, that "they had an equal detestation of the counsels of Versailles and pretensions of St Germain's."*

Acts of Assembly, as well as acts of parliament, are frequently highly illustrative of the periods to which they belong. It is so with several acts of Assembly about the time at which we have now arrived. There is one "concerning people's behaviour in time of divine worship."† There was something hopeful in this, as Presbytery, aiming at a purely spiritual worship, had been prone to pour too much contempt upon all outward forms and bodily postures. The act enjoins persons of all ranks "to forbear bowing and other expressions of civil respect, and entertaining one another with discourses, while divine worship was performing." From such things being forbidden we may infer they were practised. There had been no need of such a prohibitory law had there been no such unseemly customs. Bishop Sage declares that the Presbyterians would have considered it superstitious to uncover their head when they entered the church. "Mass John himself," says the sarcastic prelate, "doth it as mannerly as the coarsest cobbler in the parish. In he steps, and uncovers not till in the pulpit. All the congregation must sit close in the time of prayer, clap on their bonnets in the time of sermon."‡ This, though bitterly said, was but too true; and, even in our own day, there are

* Acts of Assembly, p. 423. † Ibid. p. 432, year 1709.

‡ Fundamental Charter of Presbytery, p. 362. I have omitted one of the bishop's strokes of humour as somewhat coarse.

those who recollect practices in some rural churches more indecorous still. The reproach is not yet wiped away. Notwithstanding the strong hold which religion has ever had upon the Scottish mind, unfavourable comparisons are frequently made between the devout aspect of Episcopal congregations and the apparent indifference of Presbyterian ones.

There was another act akin to that to which we have referred. It embodied a recommendation to presbyteries to have such schoolmasters everywhere chosen as were capable of teaching the common psalm-tunes, that thus the praises of God might be more decently sung in the sanctuary.* Wherever the Church of Rome reared her altars, music grew up under her shadow, and gave a new charm to her sensuous services. But Presbytery gave little countenance to such a handmaid. Her strength lay in preaching; and though the songs of Israel were sung in her tents, she thought it did not matter in what tones they were sung, provided they were sung from the heart. This act was indicative of a revived love for sacred music; but still, perhaps, there is no country in Christendom in which psalmody has been so little cultivated as in Scotland.†

But we now turn to an act of a different kind. It is one against penny-weddings. "Penny-weddings," says Pardovan, learnedly, "are neither by our civil nor ecclesiastical constitutions absolutely discharged, for that were to deprive the poorer sort of the satisfaction of meeting with their friends on that occasion. But our Assembly, considering that many persons do invite to these penny-weddings excessive numbers, among whom there frequently falls out drunkenness and uncleanness, for preventing thereof" have passed certain acts.‡ So far back as 1645, the Assembly passed an act for restraining abuses at such gatherings; in 1701 they repeated it; and in 1706 they enjoined all presbyteries to apply to the magistrates to execute the laws

* Acts of Assembly, p. 483, year 1713.

† There is also an act of this period relative to a metrical version of the scriptural songs which was in contemplation. See Acts of Assembly, p. 419.

‡ Collections and Observations, &c., book iii. title xii.

against transgressors.* Laws there were, written on the statute-book of the land, which bore directly on the subject. In the reign of Charles II., a monarch from whom we should scarcely have expected such virtuous legislation, an act had been framed restricting marriage-parties to the persons to be married, their parents, brothers, sisters, and besides these not more than four on either side.† How or when penny-bridals originated it were hard to say; but it is certain that, in despite of both parliament and Assembly, they exist in some districts of the country to the present day. When a cotter's daughter is about to become a wife, every neighbour lad and lass are made welcome to the wedding who will contribute a penny to pay for the fiddler; but friendly hands bring something more, to help the garnishing of the young couple's house, and the evening is spent in vigorous dancing and boisterous fun, and amid these delicacy and decency are sometimes forgotten. Wilkie has portrayed the scene on his graphic canvas, so lifelike, so Scotch-like, that the memory of such weddings must be immortal; but the sooner that they themselves are discontinued the better.

There is yet another act to which we wish to refer. It is entitled "An Act Concerning the Better Attendance of Members on the General Assembly."‡ It alludes to the fact that some presbyteries did not send their full number of representatives, and that many who were deputed by presbyteries never made their appearance in the Assembly-house. We shall not wonder at this, when we consider the hardships of travelling then, and know that many remote presbyteries find a difficulty in getting members to proceed

* See Acts of Assembly at dates referred to. The Act of 1701 is as follows:—"The General Assembly did, and hereby do, revive the act of the General Assembly of 1645 against Likewakes; as also the act of the said Assembly for restraining abuses at Penny-Bridals; and likewise the act of the General Assembly, 1649, discharging promiscuous dancing; and appoints the said acts to be read in churches before the congregation; and that synods inquire at presbyteries concerning their diligence anent their observation of the said acts; and recommends to presbyteries to have their thoughts upon what farther may be necessary for suppressing and preventing abuses at such occasions, and give their opinion thereanent to the next Assembly." (P. 311.)

† Charles II., parl. iii. chap. xiv.

‡ Acts of Assembly, p. 404.

to the Assembly still. Anciently every proprietor in Scotland, who held his land directly of the crown, had a seat in the parliament as a baron. But many of these barons were but paltry lairds, who counted the expense of travelling to Edinburgh and attending on the parliament as greater than the honour it conferred, and who were probably employed cutting their corn when they should have been legislating for their country; and so their right gradually fell into disuse. The same causes operated with country ministers far removed from the metropolis, and little ambitious of distinguishing themselves on the floor of the Assembly. Even during the ferment of the Covenant, an act required to be passed enforcing attendance. As might be expected, such legislation was still more necessary in times of quietude, when there was no strong excitement to draw a man from his peaceful home, and tempt him to undertake an arduous journey. Edinburgh was then farther from Aberdeen than London is now. The ministers in general required to get into the saddle, and jog along wearily till the steeple of St Gile's came in view. When the distance was not very great, the horse or horses were sent back; and in Wodrow's letters from the Assembly to his wife, we have many minute directions about the despatch of Johnny and the horses to bear him home again.* When the distance was long, the steed of course required to be stabled in the city, and

* On the 6th of May 1710, Wodrow adds the following postscript to his letter from the Assembly:—"Let Johnny, if he bring the black horse, bring a wallet with him, and light at William Ker's, in the head of the Grassmarket, on the side next to the Castle, and call for me at Mr Stewart's, the Regent's, just at Bristoe Port, or in the Parliament Close, the first door as he goes down the Mealmarket Steps, at Mrs Watson's, or at the Assembly-house." (Correspondence, vol. i. p. 149.)

On the 13th of May 1712 he writes—"You may order Johnny to come in (if this reach you upon Wednesday night) with the horses upon Thursday. If it reach you not till Thursday, he may come off part of the road, and stay by the way all night, and come in on Friday morning. It will be Friday afternoon at soonest before I can come off, and it is uncertain if I get off then. I will do my best to be home this week; but do not peremptorily expect me, for I cannot be positive if I get home. Let a horse be sent in for Mr Robison on Saturday. Let Johnny bring the wallet and Mr Guthrie's Life. . . . Let Johnny bring in both the horses with him. I know nothing but he will come home with me." (Vol. i. pp. 296, 297.)

there are still traditions in the Church of simple men from the north finding to their horror, at the close of their legislative labours, that the hostler's bill amounted to more than the worth of their nag. But the Assembly was relentless, and ordained that absentees should be censured for the first fault by their presbytery, for the second by their synod, and that for the third they should be suspended. But we must now return to our narrative.

We have already remarked that, since the disastrous 23d of July 1637, the Episcopalians in Scotland had used no liturgy. The experiment was too dangerous to be repeated in the Established Church. But dissent allows a greater latitude than is to be found within a Church fenced about by the law. What men may not impose upon others they may do themselves. It was therefore resolved by some of the Scotch Episcopalians to introduce the English liturgy in their service. The kingdoms were now united. The Episcopal Church in the south had always sympathized with her Episcopal sister in the north, and had frequently stretched out to her a helping hand. Moreover, there were many Englishmen now living in Scotland who hungered and thirsted after the ritual to which they had been accustomed from their infancy, and who complained that even when they went to the Episcopal churches seeking for bread, they received only a stone. They could no longer join in those litanies which stirred so deeply their devotional feelings, nor say "Amen" to prayers which appeared to them the most perfect utterance of Christian piety. The Rev. James Greenshields was the first to hazard reading the Anglican liturgy in public.

This James Greenshields was the son of one of the curates who had been rabbled at the Revolution. He had received orders from the Bishop of Ross after his deprivation, and, finding little encouragement for men of his calling at home, he passed over into Ireland, and for thirteen years officiated as a curate at Tynam, in the diocese of Armagh. In the beginning of 1709 he revisited his native country, and accepted an invitation to open a place of worship in Edinburgh, in which the service of the Church of England should

be observed. He first opened his church in the Canongate, but he was dislodged by the bailies. He next rented a house at the Cross, but a complaint to the Dean of Guild compelled him to vacate it too. Not to be beat, he hired a third house, and proceeded with his service. The Presbytery now took up the matter, and summoned him to their bar. He appeared, produced evidence of his ordination and good character, pled that he violated no law, and protested that he was not subject to the censure of any ecclesiastical court in North Britain. The Presbytery found that he had exercised the ministry within their bounds without their license, contrary to the purity and uniformity established by law, and that he had been guilty of high contempt in declining their jurisdiction. They therefore prohibited him from longer exercising his ministerial functions. The execution of this sentence was remitted to the magistrates, who called Greenshields before them; and as he refused to cease from exercising his office, he was sent to jail.

Greenshields now presented a bill of suspension to the Court of Session, pleading that neither the Presbytery nor the magistrates had any grounds in law for what they had done. The lords, after hearing the case, refused the bill on the ground that being ordained by an exauctorated or deprived bishop, he had no true ordination. One of the judges argued, "that an exauctorated bishop had no more power to ordain than a ballad-cryer on the streets;" and another, improving on the illustration, said, that "such a bishop had no more power to give ordination than a cashiered colonel or captain of horse had to give commissions to subalterns."*

This was awkward ground even for the Presbyterians. The bishops had been deprived by act of parliament; they had never been deposed by any ecclesiastical court. Could the legislature divest them of their spiritual powers? The Episcopalians were not slow to thrust the argument home. The ministerial function, said they, flows from Jesus Christ,

* Very similar ground to this was recently taken by Lord Brougham in a discussion about the Scotch Episcopal bishops in the House of Lords, for which he was sharply taken to task by the Bishop of Exeter. The argument is good legally, but it is bad ecclesiastically.

the Head of His Church, and has been often exercised not only independent of the civil power, but in defiance of it. The apostles preached after they were prohibited by the Jewish Sanhedrim. "We ought to obey God," said St Peter, "rather than men." St Athanasius and many other Catholic bishops were exauctorated by the Roman emperors during the Arian persecution, yet they continued in the discharge of their episcopal office, and the Universal Church approves of what they did. The Presbyterians themselves, when exauctorated in 1660, continued to preach, to administer the sacraments, to ordain; were their successors now prepared to admit that what they then did was invalid, because it had not the sanction of the law? Confident in the strength of these arguments, and also confident that the Act of Uniformity applied only to those within the Established Church, Greenshields appealed to the House of Lords.*

Though Greenshields was still lying in the common jail, his inflexible spirit emboldened others to do as he had done. This was especially the case in the north-eastern counties, where Episcopalians were numerous. Some went still farther. When a brother died, the clergy put on their vestments, formed in procession, and read the Office for the Dead at the grave. When they were summoned before the presbyteries they declined their jurisdiction. One man, notwithstanding his deposition, mounted the pulpit of Brechin, surrounded by a ring of stout country gentlemen, and when the Presbyterian minister appeared he was mobbed by boys, pelted with stones, and glad to make off.†

Such scenes as these irritated the dominant Presbyterians. They thundered against the Anglican Church in the pulpit; they laid their complaints before the Lord Advocate; they endeavoured even to put a stop to the reading of the English liturgy by English chaplains to English regiments which were stationed in Scotland. The officers, disgusted

* For a full account of this interesting case see "The True State of the Case of the Rev. Mr Greenshields, now Prisoner in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh," &c., printed at London in 1710. See also Somerville's History, p. 469; Stephen's History, vol. iv.; Carstares's Papers, &c.

† Wodrow's Correspondence, vol. i. pp. 79, 80.

at this intolerance, justly complained that they had not the liberty of worship in this Presbyterian country which was allowed them in the most bigoted Roman Catholic ones.*

All this, of course, reached the ears of the statesmen who haunted the ancient halls of Westminster, and those who wished well to the Scottish Church were annoyed and perplexed. The General Assembly's commission had, in the month of August, followed up the proceedings of the Presbytery of Edinburgh, by passing a stringent act discharging the use of set forms, rites, and ceremonies not prescribed by holy writ, and "obtesting all in the bowels of the Lord Jesus Christ to avoid and discountenance all innovations in the worship of God." This act was disapproved of in high quarters; and the Presbyterian ministers were advised, through Carstares, that the safest plan was to let the Liturgists alone, as in all probability they and their practices would soon die out.† But party-spirit ran high, and Carstares, not always able to moderate the zeal of his friends, was heard frequently to complain that his situation was peculiarly hard, being forced first to bear the ill-will of his brethren for opposing their violent proceedings, and then to justify those very measures to the administration which he had disapproved of, and in vain attempted to frustrate.‡

* An English officer at Edinburgh thus writes to a friend in London—"I was all my life a moderate man as to the dispute between the two grand parties, and could at any time have heard a good sermon from either; but really I have seen so much violence and inveteracy from the Presbyterian party here, against the Church of England in particular and nation in general, that it almost turns my stomach, and if anything makes me a highflyer it will be the unreasonable bitter invectives and prodigious imprecations which I have, with my own ears, heard from some too zealous Presbyterian clergy in their pulpits here against the Church of England. I wish they would manage with more Christian moderation; for while both parties run so high we can never expect a union in all its parts. Though our chaplain was here, yet he was not suffered to preach, which is what we were never denied in the most rigid Roman Catholic countries. The Episcopal party here being suppressed, or disaffected to the government, and most of their clergy refusing to pray for our gracious Queen Anne, so palls my inclinations towards them that for the future I resolve to stay at home and pray in private, or at least make a congregation of my own company, and pray with and for them, till God be pleased to send a better and more public spirit into mankind." (Carstares's State Papers, pp. 783, 784.)

† Carstares's State Papers, p. 773.

‡ M'Cormick's Life of Carstares, p. 79.

A.D. 1710. The embarrassment of the government was still further increased by the stir made at this time by Dr Sacheverel. This High Church divine had preached two sermons—one at the Derby Assize, and another before the Lord Mayor of London, on the anniversary of the Gunpowder Plot—and had afterwards published them. In the month of January following he was impeached before the Lords for teaching in these sermons that the Revolution had been effected by unjustifiable means; that the toleration of Dissenters was unreasonable ; and that her Majesty's present Administration imperilled both the Church and the State. After a tedious trial and vehement debates he was found guilty. He was forbidden to preach for three years, and his sermons were condemned to be burned by the hangman. But the result of the trial was regarded by the High Church party as a triumph rather than a defeat, and their favourite divine was more than compensated for the ignominy done to his discourses and the silence imposed upon himself, by receiving ovations wherever he went. Within a few weeks afterwards the Whigs were dismissed from office, and the Tories came into power.

A.D. 1711. All this had so occupied the House of Lords that the case of Greenshields had not yet been heard; but the time was not lost, for the turn affairs had taken was greatly in his favour. If even Whigs and Low Churchmen had felt that they could not decently ask the British parliament to condemn the use of the English liturgy by a body of Dissenters north of the Tweed ; much less could it be hoped that Tories, High Churchmen, and concealed Jacobites would do it. But Tories, as well as Whigs, were anxious to avoid a trial altogether if possible, for they knew that whichever way the decision went, great offence would be given, and probably public discontent created. Mr Harley, afterwards Earl of Oxford, now at the head of affairs, took Lockhart of Carnwath, one of the ablest and busiest of the Scotch Episcopalians, into the Speaker's chamber, and urged upon him not to press the appeal, as the Church of England would be indignant if Greenshields were not protected, and the Church of Scotland if he were. Lockhart, however,

stood firm to the purpose of his party to have the question tried, remarking, that he had no great reason to love the Presbyterians, as they had frequently, from their pulpits, consigned him to the gallows and the devil.* In the month of April 1711, the appeal was heard, the decision of the Court of Session reversed, and the magistrates of Edinburgh found liable in costs. It was a most righteous judgment; but it gave deep offence to the great body of the Presbyterians, who could not brook within the bounds of Scotland any form of worship but their own.

While these controversies between the Presbyterians and Prelatists were raging in the courts of the Church and the courts of law, authors were dipping their pens in wormwood, and writing pamphlets, dialogues, and treatises on the questions in debate. Robert Calder, an outed curate, had published his severe satire on Presbytery—"Presbyterian Eloquence Displayed." Sage, who had been one of the Episcopal ministers of Glasgow before the Revolution, and who was subsequently made a bishop, published first his "Principles of the Cyprianic Age," and afterwards, his "Fundamental Charter of Presbytery." In this latter work he discussed the article in the Claim of Right which asserts that the Church of Scotland had been reformed from Popery by Presbytery, and that the superiority of any office in the Church above Presbytery had always been a grievance to the nation, and was contrary to the inclinations of the people. He minutely traces the history of the Church; labours to show that the superintendents in the days of Knox were no other than bishops with a new name; that Melville was the father of Presbytery; that a majority of the people at the time of the Revolution were attached to Episcopacy; and that the modern Presbyterians had swerved widely from the faith and worship of their reforming forefathers. The book exhibits much reading, and is written with vigour; but it is deeply dyed in party asperity, and is not free from unfairness in its statement of facts.

John Anderson, first minister of Dumbarton, and afterwards of the Ramshorn Church, Glasgow, came forth as the

* Lockhart's Papers, vol. i. p. 347.

champion of Presbytery. About 1710 he published "A Dialogue between a Curate and a Countryman," and, a year afterwards, "The Second Dialogue between the Curate and the Countryman concerning the English Service." He next ventured on a more ambitious work, "The Countryman's Letter to the Curate, wherein, besides an historical view of the English liturgy, the assertions of Sage, the author of the 'Fundamental Charter of Presbytery,' concerning its universal usage in Scotland at the time of the Reformation, are examined, and proved to be false." This letter is the clever production of a somewhat violent polemic; but, in regard to the use of the Anglican liturgy in Scotland at the time of the Reformation, modern research has shown that Sage was right, and that Anderson was wrong. Calder, the author of "Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence Displayed," hazarded a reply, in which he indecently reproached Anderson with being a "dominie." But Anderson was a match even for Calder in coarse invective; and in a pamphlet entitled "Curate Calder Whipt," he exclaimed—"Didst thou think thou bantered him by calling him *dominie*, thou pitiful wretch? It was a real banter on thyself. He has indeed acted the *dominie* over thee, in lashing thee, so far as argument could do it, sufficient to have made anything smart but such a dull, insensible ass as thyself, who hast thy skull stuft with guts instead of brains." It was not till 1714 that Anderson published his ablest and most elaborate work—his "Defence of the Church Government, Faith, Worship, and Spirit of the Presbyterians," designed as an answer to Rhynd's Apology for leaving the Presbyterian Communion.*

The General Assembly was still diligently pursuing its task of supplying the north with Presbyterian ministers. But the north was not always sensible of the boon that was designed to be conferred upon it; and many riots took place in consequence of the attempt to thrust Presbyterian pastors upon Episcopal congregations. Several of these were reported to the Assembly which met in 1711. The minister of Gairloch, when on his way to preach in an Episcopal

* I have derived these notices of Anderson chiefly from a sketch of him given by the Editor of the Wodrow Correspondence (Dr M'Crie) in vol. i.

parish in Ross, was met on the confines by a company of armed men, carried off, and thrust into a shed among cattle, where he was kept for four days, and very sparely fed. At the end of that time it was supposed his Presbyterian ardour was abated; and he was brought before Sir John M'Kenzie of Coul, who informed him that no Presbyterian minister should be placed in any parish where he had influence, unless it were done by the queen's forces. With this intimation he was dismissed.*

At Old Deer the presbytery assembled to induct a Mr Gordon. This gentleman was the son of the Provost of Aberdeen, and was accompanied by about forty of his friends, some of whom were provided with firearms. The town was in a state of intense excitement on account of the violence to be done to its religion, and a crowd besieged the door of the house where the presbytery were to meet. When a justice of the peace attempted to make a way for the presbytery and presentee, stones were thrown from the roofs and windows of the adjacent houses. Upon this the Aberdonians, zealous for their provost's son, fired upon the mob, and wounded some of them. "Unless there had been a seasonable interposition," says Wodrow, "there would have been bloody work; but the presbytery retired." But though the inhabitants of Old Deer had a temporary triumph, the strong arm of the law afterwards compelled them to receive Mr Gordon peaceably, to pay the expense of the process which had been raised before the court, to cause the principal rioters to appear as penitents before the congregation, and to give security for the good behaviour of the rest.†

At Aberlemno the triumph of Episcopacy was more peaceful and more legitimate. A Presbyterian minister had laboured there for two years, and not a single creature

* Wodrow's Correspondence, vol. i. p. 216. "When they (the Assembly) came to the article anent the planting of vacant churches," says Wodrow, "they tell the queen that they are labouring to do it, but meet with very inhuman treatment in some places from those that are disaffected to the present Establishment. The occasion of this is a great many lamentable representations from the north, and particularly one from Ross." Then the historian goes on to tell the story we have given in the text.

† Ibid. pp. 218 and 226. Also Analecta, vol. ii. p. 187.

could be induced to come and hear him preach. Every man, woman, and child in the parish adhered to the Episcopal curate, who was a man of talents and influence. The Presbyterian begged the Assembly that he might be removed to another parish.*

As the Church was plagued by Episcopalians in the north, so was she by Cameronians in the south. She literally held the middle between the two extremes. A Mr M'Millan had been minister of Balmaghie, and, having been deposed for his extravagances, was now the high-priest of the Society people, who began to be called by his name. A Mr M'Gie was settled in his place; but M'Millan remained in the parish, and, meeting with M'Gie at a funeral, he struck him, and was instantly joined by some women, who shouted, "Kill the dog," and threatened the life of the new incumbent.† All this was duly reported to the Assembly, which was greatly perplexed as to how it should deal with such assailants.

The Episcopalians resolved to follow up the victory which they had obtained by the decision of the House of Lords in the case of Greenshields. They resolved to ask the British parliament to grant them a full toleration for the practice of their religion. Everything boded success. The Tories were in power. A bad impression had been made upon the English mind, by reports which had been spread far and wide regarding the intolerance of the Presbyterians,—how Englishmen resident in the north could not have the Common Prayers read to them,—how they could not even get their children baptized without going to a Presbyterian minister, and subscribing the Confession of Faith.‡ Dis-

* Wodrow's Correspondence, vol. i. p. 223. † Ibid. pp. 219 and 222.

‡ In a letter from the Assembly, addressed to his wife, Wodrow says, "And since there are complaints come in from the English officers, that they cannot get their children baptized privately, nor without owning our Confession of Faith and Catechism, which they know not, and that representations anent this are come from court, there is a general overture recommended to a committee of five or six, to be brought in, recommending all proper gaining methods to be used to persons of another education and communion in admitting to baptism and Church privileges, as said, otherwise they will bring their own ministers down." (Correspondence, vol. i. p. 227.)

In 1711 the Assembly passed an "Act concerning the Receiving of Strangers into Church Communion, and Baptizing their Children," which was dictated

senters were tolerated in England; was it not fair that Dissenters should be tolerated in Scotland too? Was there any reason why Presbytery should be more imperious in its mood than Prelacy? The English members of the legislature very naturally sympathized with their fellow-religionists beyond the Tweed, and the Scottish Jacobites fomented the feeling. In November 1711, Lockhart of Carnwath published a letter which was designed to pave the way for a toleration.

A.D. 1712. On the 21st of January 1712, a bill was brought into the House of Commons "to prevent the disturbance of the Episcopal communion in Scotland in the exercise of their religious worship; and for repealing an act of the Scottish Parliament, entitled an Act against irregular Baptisms and Marriages." The commission of the Church had taken alarm, and despatched Principal Carstares, Professor Blackwell, and Mr Baillie, minister of Inverness, to London, to oppose the bill by every means in their power.* They did what they could. They presented a petition against it; they declared it was contrary to the Articles of Union; they brought all the influence they possessed to bear upon the members of both Houses; but the tide was running too strong to be stemmed back. The bill was discussed with some animosity; it underwent several alterations; but it was finally passed by an overwhelming majority in both branches of the legislature.

The act proceeds upon the preamble that those of the Episcopal persuasion had been frequently disturbed in their religious assemblies, and their ministers prosecuted for reading the English Service and administering the sacraments according to the manner prescribed in the liturgy of the Church of England. It declares that it should be lawful for

by a liberal spirit. Ministers were enjoined to show all tenderness to strangers who wished to be admitted to sealing ordinances, "and if such strangers, being free from scandal, and professing their faith in Christ and obedience to Him, shall desire baptism to their children, ministers shall cheerfully comply with their desire, in administering the sacrament of baptism to their children, upon the parents engaging to educate them in the fear of God, and knowledge of the principles of the Reformed Protestant religion." (Acts of Assembly, p. 457.)

* The Letters of Professor Blackwell, while in London, are published in the Miscellany of the Spalding Club (vol. i.), and give us some interesting details of the manner in which he and his coadjutors managed their mission.

them henceforward to meet and worship in their own manner, provided that their pastors were ordained by Protestant bishops, that they took the Oaths of Allegiance and Abjuration, and that their assemblies were not held with closed doors. It repeals the act against irregular baptisms and marriages —a cruel law, which subjected the Episcopal priest who baptized a child or married a couple to perpetual imprisonment or exile.

The bill, when first introduced, did not require the Episcopalian ministers to take the Abjuration Oath, but the Presbyterians managed to get a clause to that effect introduced in the Lords, hoping by that means to render the act nugatory, as it was known that the Episcopalians, upon no consideration, would abjure the exiled dynasty. But the Jacobites were a match for the Presbyterians in intrigue, and argued that if such an oath were made imperative upon the Episcopalians who were merely tolerated, much more should it be made imperative upon the Presbyterians who were established. The argument was specious and prevailed, and the clause was made to apply to Presbyterians and Episcopalians alike.* But when the Jacobites used the argument, they knew that many of the Presbyterians would refuse to take the oath, because they thought that it sanctioned Episcopacy, and required that the reigning monarch should be of the Episcopal communion. The Presbyterians fell into the pit themselves had dug. The oath could not be decently pressed upon the one without being also pressed upon the other, and it became a source of bitter contention in the Established Church, as we shall afterwards see.

There was another clause in the bill which caused considerable discussion. It exempted all from the jurisdiction of the Church judicatories, saving the Presbyterians. At a meeting with some members of parliament, Carstares objected to this clause, as it would weaken Church censures. Lockhart bluntly told him that he believed his secret reason for objecting to the clause was, that people when subjected to Presbyterian discipline would flee to the Episcopalians

* Burnet's History of his own Times, vol. iv. Hetherington's History of the Church of Scotland.

for shelter; but still, that he so far agreed with him. The clause was altered.* But even as it now stands in the act, it shears the Church of her ancient strength. It provides that no civil pain should follow excommunication, and prohibits the civil magistrate from compelling any person to appear before the ecclesiastical judicatories. The days when excommunication was equal to outlawry, and when the Church could call in the magistrate to enforce its decrees, were for ever gone. Even the highest spiritual censures were limited to their effect upon the soul of the culprit, and the Church, for compelling compearance at its bar, and obedience to its decisions, was left to depend upon its own powers. It might cut the contumacious man, or the drunkard, or the fornicator, or the heretic, from the body of the faithful, but it could do no more. The thunderbolt was wrenched from the Moderator's hand; the power of the sword in our country was now for ever separated from the power of the keys.†

The Toleration Act was only a measure of justice, but the Presbyterians regarded it as an undermining of the Established Church, as a licensing of schism, heresy, and sedition. Even good and holy men grudged the Episcopalians the liberty of religious worship which was awarded them. It is certain the Scottish parliament could not have passed such a law. It was one of the benefits of the Union that legislation was now carried on in a serene region, far elevated above the storms which raged in the political and ecclesiastical atmosphere of Scotland. Men did not see that then, but we see it now. Narrow notions of Church polity and religious liberty had long reigned in the north; it was well they were now forcibly widened by an influence from the south. The sister Churches of Great Britain have on more occasions than one rendered such service the one to the other. Toleration was now for the first time established in our country by law. Cromwell had previously preached it with a drawn sword in his hand.

* See Lockhart, Papers, vol. i. p. 379.

† In the reign of William III. an act had been passed depriving excommunication of its civil effects. See Acts of Scottish Parliament, William and Mary, parl. i. chap. xxviii.

But unfortunately the parliament did not rest satisfied with the Toleration Act; it proceeded to pass an act for restoring patronage. As patronage has been the source of almost all the disputes, heart-burnings, and divisions which have torn the Church from that day to this, we shall shortly trace its history down to 1712.

Patronage arose in very early times, and from very obvious causes. A pious man founded a church, and naturally assumed the right of choosing the minister. It would appear that at an early period patrons even claimed the right of giving collation, but the Roman Decretals forbade this as an usurpation of ecclesiastical power.* But as it was essential to the wellbeing of Christendom that churches should be built and endowed, landholders were encouraged to this pious work by many inducements. They were not only allowed to present to the living, but they had a conspicuous seat set apart for them in the church, and a burial-place beneath its pavement; their names and arms were sculptured upon the walls and over the doors, upon the bells, chalices, and other sacred utensils; they were specially mentioned in the public prayers, and had a place assigned them in all solemn processions.† They had still more substantial privileges. When the benefice was vacant they enjoyed its fruits, and had even the power at all times of appropriating these as they pleased.

When the rage to found and endow monasteries was epidemic in our country, many patrons bestowed their parishes upon Religious Houses, generally upon condition that a specified number of masses should be annually said for their souls, and the souls of their wives, their parents, their children, and their friends. Others gave their parishes to enrich a bishopric, which was perhaps at the time held by a relative. To such an extent was this system carried, that at the time of the Reformation, out of the thousand parishes of Scotland, about seven hundred had been thus appropriated. The bishop or the abbot who now held the parish drew the tithes, and appointed a stipendiary vicar to serve the cure.

* Connel's Treatise on Tithes, vol. i. p. 18. Forbes's Treatise of Church Lands, &c., p. 43.

† Forbes, p. 40.

These churches were called patrimonial; those held by parsons appointed by patrons were called patronate.

After the Reformation it was declared in the "First Book of Discipline" that "it appertained unto the people and to every several congregation to elect their minister."* This form of polity, however, was never sanctioned by law, and the parliament which met in 1567, under the Regency of Moray, declared that while the examination and admission of ministers belonged to the Church, "the presentation of laic patronages was reserved to the just and ancient patrons." If the superintendent refused to induct the presentee, the patron might appeal to the General Assembly, and its decision was final.†

After its first struggle with Episcopacy, Presbytery was re-established in 1592. The famous act passed in that year, placing the government of the Church in kirk-sessions, presbyteries, synods, and General Assemblies, provided that presbyteries should "be bound to receive and admit whatever qualified minister was presented by his Majesty or laic patrons."‡ In 1596 the second struggle with Episcopacy began, and by 1612 Episcopacy was victorious. By acts of Assembly and acts of parliament, patrons were now instructed to direct their presentations to the bishop of the diocese where the vacant benefice was. If the patron did not present, the bishop was empowered to do so, *jure devoluto;* and if the bishop refused to admit a duly qualified minister lawfully presented, the patron might retain the fruits of the benefice, and apply for letters of horning, "charging the ordinary to do his duty in the receiving and admitting such a person as the said patron had presented.§

In 1638 came the Covenanted Assembly, in which Episcopacy was overturned to its very foundations, and Presbytery again set up in its stead. From this time patrons seem to have been very little consulted in the settlement of min-

* First Book of Discipline, chap. iv. sect. ii. The Second Book of Discipline leaves the election of ministers "to the judgment of the eldership and the consent of the congregation."

† James VI., parl. i. chap. vii.

‡ Ibid. parl. xii. chap. cxiv.

§ Dunlop's Parochial Law, p. 197.

isters; the Church took the whole matter into its own hands; but it was not till 1649 that patronage was abolished by law. In that year, however, the parliament declared patronage to be an evil under which the Lord's people had long groaned; that it had no warrant in the Word of God, but was founded on the canon law, was a Popish custom, brought into the Church in the time of ignorance and superstition; and therefore they abolished it, and empowered presbyteries to settle ministers "on the call or with the consent of the congregation, on whom none was to be intruded against their will." Following up this act, the General Assembly, that same year, enacted that the kirk-session of each congregation should elect the minister, and that, if he was approved of by the congregation, he should be tried and admitted by the presbytery; but that if a majority of the congregation dissented, the matter was to be reported to the presbytery, and the presbytery, unless they found the reasons of dissent grounded on causeless prejudices, were to appoint a new election to be made.*

Next came the Restoration in 1660, followed by the Act Recissory, which cut down at one fell stroke all the legislation of the last twenty years. Episcopacy was set up, patronage restored, those who had entered the ministry under the Act 1649 were driven from their parishes, and the dismal years of persecution began.

Then came the Revolution, when the Popish James was declared to have forfeited the throne, and Presbytery was again established in our country as the form of worship most agreeable to the inclinations of the people. In 1690, William III., though with a grudge, consented to the abolition of patronage; and the parliament provided that, when a vacancy in any church occurred, the elders and heritors were to choose a person for the approval of the congregation; and if the congregation disapproved of the person thus selected, they were to give in their reasons to the presbytery, by whom the whole matter was to be finally determined. It was further provided that the patrons, in consideration of their being deprived of their ancient rights, were to receive

* Acts of Assembly, p. 212. See also Dunlop's Parochial Law.

from the parish six hundred merks, on obtaining payment of which they were obliged to execute a formal renunciation of the patronage. They were also to receive all the vacant teinds of the parish to which no other could prove a right.*

It is somewhat remarkable that, notwithstanding the religious fervour of the period, only two parishes, Old Monkland and New Monkland, obtained effectual renunciations. Other two, Calder and Strathblane, had paid the money, but the one had as yet received no renunciation, and the other had got one which was afterwards declared by the courts of law to be invalid.† Such was the state of matters when the British parliament in 1712 proceeded to legislate on the subject.

Carstares, Blackwell, and Baillie were still in London, instructed by the commission of Assembly to oppose the bill. They presented a petition to the House of Peers, in which they traced the history of patronage.‡ They declared that it had always been reckoned a grievance and a burden; they alluded to the concession of tithes which had been made to the patrons when patronage was abolished in 1690; and argued that if it was now restored, they would enjoy both the purchase and the price. They further alleged that the restitution of patronage would gratify only a few, and distress very many; that the patrons themselves did not in general desire it; that it would breed contests and disorders between patrons and presbyteries, heritors and people; that it would lead to Simoniacal pactions and unacceptable settlements; and, last of all, that it would be a

* William and Mary, parl. i. chap. xxiii. year 1690.

† Dunlop's Parochial Law, p. 203, note.

‡ This petition was addressed simply to the peers present in parliament, as the Presbyterians had scruples about addressing the bishops as Lords Spiritual. The Duke of Buckingham, and another lord, objected to this title, and moved that Carstares and his brethren should be taken into custody. The Earl of Loudon saved his countrymen from this disgrace by saying that they did not know the forms of the House; and the matter was dropt upon the petition being withdrawn. It was again presented, addressed in regular form, to the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and the Church was then allowed to be heard by counsel. (Wodrow Correspondence, vol. i. p. 307, note.)

violation of the Act of Security, which formed a fundamental condition of the Union.*

It was argued, on the other side, that at the time of the Reformation, patronage was preserved; that it was continued by the Act 1592—the charter of presbytery; that the parliament which abolished it in 1649 was a mere faction, so that it might be said to have been all along part and parcel of the Presbyterian Church. How could it be said to be an infraction of the Union, when the Articles of Union only guaranteed the continuance of Presbytery, and patronage, so far from being opposed to Presbytery, had existed with it throughout almost its entire history? How could it be alleged that the patrons were to receive back their patronages, and retain the price that was paid for them, when it was notorious that scarcely a single parish had paid the thirty-three pounds required by the Act of 1690 to compel a renunciation, and the unappropriated teinds were a mockery? The truth was, the heritors had the price, and the presbyteries had the purchase; for the one still retained their teinds, and the others now exercised the patronage. We are told, said they, that popular election is agreeable to the Word of God, and the practice of the primitive Church. But what is this to the purpose? There is no such thing as popular election in Scotland. It is in the hands of the heritors and elders; and if the people object, the decision lies with the presbyteries in the end. As for Simony, it was tauntingly said, surely the Presbyterian ministers were too good men to indulge in such practices. No good objection, it was finally urged, lay against the bill; and its adoption would put an end to the unseemly contests which had arisen in the election of ministers, and make the Church of Scotland more respectable in itself, and more agreeable to the nobility and gentry.†

The bill passed both Houses by large majorities, and on the 22d of April it received the royal assent and became

* This document is given in the Appendix to Carstares's State Papers, pp. 796–98.

† See Remarks upon the Representations made by the Kirk of Scotland concerning Patronages, Appendix to Carstares's State Papers, pp. 798–800.

law. Its preamble asserts that the presentation of ministers to vacant parishes had belonged to patrons till the year 1690, when it was taken from them and bestowed upon the heritors and elders, and that this new way of calling ministers had occasioned great heats and inconveniences, and besides was a hardship to those whose ancestors had founded and endowed the churches. A minute inquiry into Church affairs between 1690 and 1712 reveals that there had been many unseemly spectacles at the settlement of ministers; but these had almost all arisen from Episcopal congregations resisting Presbyterian ministers, and would have happened if these ministers had been presented by patrons instead of being chosen by heritors and elders. There were also disputes about the transportation of ministers from one parish to another; but they arose from the exceeding scarcity of Presbyterian clergymen, and many different churches being clamorous for the same man. There were some cases of altercation among the electors, or between the electors and the congregation. Sometimes a kirk-session increased the number of its members, that it might outvote the heritors; sometimes the heritors fell out amongst themselves regarding the candidates, and each side created new heritors to increase its party, as we have seen done to secure the election of a member for parliament. But such cases were comparatively rare, and could do no great harm.* They were the necessary result of independent thought. If they can be regarded as sores, it is certain they soon healed and left no evil effects behind them. On the other hand, the restoration of patronage begat divisions and strifes which have continued from that day to this. It has not brought back the nobility and gentry to the national Church; it has led to three dis-

* The Rev. Dr Cook, in his evidence before the Patronage Committee, says that, between 1690 and 1712, there were at least a hundred cases of disputed transportation; and between 1703 and 1712, from twenty to thirty cases of conflicting calls. But no one will marvel at this who remembers the state of the Church at the time. Probably five or six hundred parishes had been suddenly emptied of their Episcopal incumbents, and there were not enough of Presbyterian ministers to fill them. It was very natural the people should quarrel for the ministers that were to be had. The Church was in an abnormal state.

astrous secessions; and the concluding chapter in its history is yet to be written.

The Patronage Act carried dismay into the Presbyterian ranks. All agreed in reprobating it as a most mischievous piece of legislation. The courtly Carstares had done what he could to oppose it; and now that it was passed, he joined with the Covenanting Wodrow in lamenting it. Sagacious men believed that it was preliminary to the reintroduction of Episcopacy.* As the bill went up to the Lords, it was not even provided that the presentee should be a Presbyterian; and it was only by the efforts of the Duke of Argyle that a clause to that effect was inserted. Many of the patrons of Scotland were then, as they are still, Episcopalians, and it was dreaded that they might use their rights of presentation to advance the interests of their party. The very worst was anticipated; and the fears of the ministers were increased by the taunting and triumphant tone of the Jacobites. It is certain that it was chiefly through Jacobite influence that it was brought into the legislature and passed.†

The General Assembly met on the 1st of May. At that time it was known in Edinburgh that the Patronage Bill had passed the House of Lords, and had been remitted to the Commons.‡ The royal letter presented by her Majesty's Commissioner, the Duke of Athole, contained a reference to the proceedings of the parliament:—"Lest any late occurrences may have possessed some of you with fears and jealousies, we take this solemn occasion to assure you it is our firm purpose to maintain the Church of Scotland as established by law." The Assembly, in their answer, were honest enough to say, "The late occurrences which your Majesty is pleased to take notice of have, we must acknowledge, possessed us with fears and jealousies." They went farther. They approved of the petitions which the commission had presented to her Majesty while the Toleration and Patronage Bills were in dependence, ordered them to be engrossed in their records, and in the usual address to the queen said,

* See M'Cormick's Life of Carstares. † Lockhart, Papers.
‡ Wodrow's Correspondence, vol. i. p. 275.

"We, being met in the General Assembly of this Church, do in all humble duty beg leave to put your Majesty farther in mind of the things which were laid before your Majesty by the commission of the last General Assembly, as grievous and prejudicial to this Church; and, indeed, the late occurrences that have happened do so nearly affect our well-settled and secured Church establishment, that we cannot possibly be silent. That the inconveniences and troubles that we thence apprehend may never be found amongst us is our most serious wish. But since your Majesty in your gracious letter to this Assembly hath been pleased not only to assure us of your firm purpose to maintain the Church of Scotland as established by law, but also that you will employ your utmost care to protect us and redress our just complaints, we most humbly beg leave to acquaint your Majesty that we have instructed and empowered the commission appointed by this Assembly to advert carefully to all good opportunities, and to use all proper means and methods whereby these our grievances may be properly redressed."*

There was another act passed in this session of parliament which vexed the Presbyterians. The "First Book of Discipline" had denounced the observance of holidays as superstitious, and that they were so was devoutly believed by the whole Presbyterian population. It was one of the marks by which they were distinguished from the Episcopalians. The observation of Christmas and Easter was one of the Articles of Perth against which the Presbyterians rebelled. During the heyday of the Covenant there were frequent fasts, but no festivals. During the dominancy of Episcopacy there was a return to holidays. When William and Mary came to the throne and re-established the Presbyterian Church, the first Scottish parliament gratified the feeling of the country by discharging the "Yule Vacancies," and compelling the Lords of Session to continue in the administration of justice without interruption from the 1st of November to the last day of February. But the tide was again turned, Jacobite counsels were followed, Anglican influences were omnipotent, and an act was passed restoring the Christmas Recess. We can now

* Acts of Assembly, p. 477.

look back upon this measure with religious indifference, and even Presbyterian Lords of Session, so often as Christmas comes round, may feel silently grateful to the act which allows them to eat their Christmas dinner with a digestion unimpaired by the pressure of judicial duties; but it was not so regarded at the time, and, looking to the circumstances in which it was passed, we must pronounce it a wanton insult to the religious prejudices of the nation.

But the Episcopalians had still another measure in store. On the 31st of May, on the motion of Mr Murray, son of Lord Stormont, the House of Commons agreed to address the queen—"That she would be pleased to apply the rents of the late bishops' lands in North Britain that remained in the crown for the support of such of the Episcopal clergy there as should take the oaths to her Majesty." On the 16th of June, the queen acquainted her faithful Commons that she had acceded to their request. It is certain that many of the Episcopal clergy had been precipitated into abject poverty; collections among the charitable had already been made for them, both in England and Ireland; and if this measure was designed to be merely temporary—to relieve poverty, and not to propagate dissent—every merciful man will pronounce it to be good.* But when all the measures of this session were taken together—the Toleration Act, the Patronage Act, the Christmas Recess Act, the resolution of the crown to endow the Episcopal clergy out of the bishops' teinds—no marvel that the Presbyterians were dismayed, and began to fear that their days were numbered. Their alarm was increased by whispers that still more ominous measures were in preparation. The General Assembly, it was said, was to be interdicted from meeting, or allowed to meet only to be dissolved.† The presbyteries were to be compelled to induct all licentiates who received presentations without further form or trial. But time wore on, and the danger and the dread passed away together.

* Carstares had projected a plan for sustaining the ejected curates out of the bishops' teinds. It would appear that this Royal Bounty was never carried out. Some years afterwards a measure was brought into parliament for the more effectual attainment of the same object, but it was abandoned.

† M'Cormick's Life of Carstares, p. 83.

Reference has already been made to the Abjuration Oath, which, according to the provisions of the Toleration Act, was to be imposed alike upon the Presbyterian and Episcopal clergy. The person who took this oath abjured the Pretender, and promised to support the succession to the crown, *as* settled by certain specified acts of the English parliament. When these acts were examined they were found to require that the sovereign should be of the communion of the Church of England. This was a stumbling-block to many of the Presbyterians, who argued that if they took the oath they not only assented to this limitation of the crown, but gave their sanction to a form of Church government which they regarded as sinful, and which some of them considered themselves bound by Covenant obligations to extirpate.*

The Assembly of 1712 agreed upon an address to the queen, in which, after strongly declaring their attachment to the succession of the crown in the Protestant line, as entailed on the Princess Sophia, Electress and Duchess-Dowager of Hanover, they stated their scruples as to taking the oath.† But it was not in the power of the queen to dispense with an oath required by act of parliament, and all that the Assembly could intend by this address was to prevent misconceptions in regard to their principles. The law required the oath to be taken, and what was to be done? Some thought that the law must be honoured. Others declared that they would obey God rather than man; that conscience was more to be respected than law. The 28th of October was the last day on which the oath could be taken, and every one put off taking it as long as he could. "The melancholy day," writes Wodrow on the 30th, "is now

* The following was the obnoxious clause in this oath:—"And I do faithfully promise, to the utmost of my power, to support, maintain, and defend the succession of the crown against him, the said James, and all other persons whatsoever, As the same is and stands settled by an act, entitled, *An Act declaring the Rights and Liberties of the Subject, and settling the Succession of the Crown to her present Majesty and the Heirs of her body, being Protestants;* and As the same, by another act, entitled, *An Act for the further limitation of the Crown, and better securing the Rights and Liberties of the Subject*, is, and stands settled," &c. &c. To satisfy the Presbyterians, the Lords agreed to substitute the word *which* for the offensive word *as*, but the Commons refused their sanction to the change.

† Acts of Assembly, pp. 467–70.

over."* Principal Carstares, he goes on to tell, accompanied by a body of his brethren, presented himself before a Justice of the Peace Court in Edinburgh, read a declaration as to the sense in which they understood the oath, then took it, and finally protested in the hands of a notary.† Scenes of a similar kind happened in Glasgow and other parts of Scotland. But a considerable proportion of the clergy refused to take the oath under any circumstances, and the government did not resort to severity to enforce it.

The Church was now divided into two factions—the Jurants and Nonjurants. As a matter of course, they mutually upbraided one another. The Nonjurants reproached the Jurants as traitors to the good old cause. The Jurants flung in the face of the Nonjurants that they loved their own needless scruples more than the peace and prosperity of the Church. In some districts of the country the Covenanting spirit was still strong, and there the people forsook the Jurants, as sinful temporizers, and flocked in crowds to the ministry of the Nonjurants. The danger of a schism in the Church was imminent. When the Assembly met in 1713, by the tact and influence of Carstares, an act was passed for maintaining unity and peace, in which these divisions were deplored, schism was deprecated, and all were exhorted to mutual forbearance and charity.‡

This act helped to soothe the agitation which had arisen, but still the Jurants and Nonjurants continued, in some cases, to keep aloof from one another. The Nonjurants especially, priding themselves on their superior merits, avoided their brethren. When the sacramental season came round, they invited only those of their own way of thinking to assist them, and their tents were surrounded by a vast multitude, congregated from every part of the country. Some ministers went further. One debarred from the communion-table all who had taken the sinful oath. Another declared in his sermon, that every minister who had taken it was guilty of three great sins:—he had renounced the Solemn League and

* Wodrow's Correspondence, vol. i. pp. 321, 322.

† Lockhart, who was present, gives a somewhat disingenuous account of this matter. (Papers, vol. i.)

‡ Acts of Assembly, p. 482.

Covenant; he had taken the crown off Christ's head, and set it on the queen's; he had caused a division in the Church which was like to be followed by dismal consequences. Others read the oath from the pulpit, and then told the people that to take it was to bury the Reformation, and put the gravestone on the League; and that the next step in the downward progress would be to embrace Prelacy, and set up its ceremonies.* A schism was in fact begun. Some of the Nonjurants refused to meet with their brethren in presbyteries and synods; and, looking upon the parishes of those who had sworn the oath as lacking a true ministry, they did not hesitate to enter them, and baptize the children which were brought to them by admiring parents.† The more sober Nonjurants condemned and deplored these extremes,‡ but still they were carried so far that the Assembly a second time had to utter its voice against them. Five years afterwards the oath was altered, and a subject which caused many heart-burnings, and shook the Church to its very foundations, is now altogether forgotten, or remembered only to make us marvel that so small a spark should have kindled so great a flame.

In the Assembly which met in May 1714, it was thought proper to address the queen regarding the religious state of the country. It was declared that Popery was on the increase; that in a few parishes several hundreds had lately gone over to it; and that Popish bishops and priests openly celebrated mass, gave confirmation, met for worship in chapels, and seduced the people. The Episcopalians were represented as equally insolent. Not satisfied with using the liturgy in their meeting-houses, some of them had read it in parish churches. A mob of Episcopalians had seized upon the Old Church of Aberdeen, and had set up their worship in it. But with all their love for the liturgy, it was told they either altogether omitted the prescribed prayers

* Wodrow's Correspondence, vol. i. p. 340.

† Acts of Assembly, p. 489.

‡ Wodrow was a Nonjurant, and deplored such divisive courses; even Boston, who was generally somewhat violent in his ways, condemned those who went so far.

for her Majesty, or so altered them that their words would apply equally well to the Pretender.* Wodrow's Correspondence corroborates these statements. The Papists and the Episcopalians were equally busy. The former celebrated their worship with a publicity upon which they had not ventured since the flight of James VII., and the latter were reading their liturgy everywhere. More than this, they were scandalizing the Presbyterians by putting on their canonicals at burials, and reading the Service for the Dead at the grave. Some of them even held kirk-sessions and exercised church discipline, absolving those whom the Presbyterians would have condemned.

Before another Assembly met Queen Anne was no more. She died on the 1st of August, the last of the long line of Stewarts who have occupied the throne. She was a princess of mean abilities, and seldom thought or acted for herself; but her private character was irreproachable; and she was surrounded by statesmen and soldiers, whose great talents have given a lustre to her reign. The consummate eloquence of Oxford and Bolingbroke guided her counsels; the martial genius of Marlborough led her armies to victory; and the great names of Swift, Addison, and Pope, make many say that English literature reached its acme in the days of Queen Anne. The Union of the two kingdoms, however, will ever be remembered as the chief glory of her reign.

The queen herself had engaged in plots to secure the succession to her brother, the son of the unfortunate James, but upon her death George Louis, Elector of Hanover, was peaceably proclaimed king, and arriving in the country soon afterwards, assumed the government by the style and title of George I. The Tories were now dismissed from office; Bolingbroke and Ormond, under the dread of impeachment, fled, and every place of emolument and trust was placed in the hands of the Whigs.

The accession of George I. gave unmingled satisfaction to the Presbyterian population of Scotland. It was a pledge of the continuance of their ecclesiastical polity. The monarch

* Acts of Assembly, p. 491.

did everything to assure them of his favour. In the midst of a brilliant gathering of English and Scotch nobles he took the oath required by the Act of Security. When the Assembly met in May 1715, he thanked them for the proofs they had given of their loyalty and affection, and assured them that he would inviolably maintain their Presbyterian Church in all its rights and privileges. The Assembly, full of gratitude, returned an answer characterized by piety and wisdom.*

That address is signed by William Carstares. He had presided in this Assembly with his usual dignity; but he was never to sit in an Assembly more, till he joined the General Assembly of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven. In the month of August he was struck by apoplexy, and though he partly recovered from it, his faculties were impaired, and he lingered on in a lethargic state till the 28th of December, when he expired. In him the Church of Scotland lost her wisest counsellor and her greatest benefactor. He was both a great and a good man. Though long the inmate of a court, he never forgot for a moment his sacred office; and the pressure of public business, in which he was continually involved, never deadened him to religious feeling or family affection. His charity was unbounded, and was made doubly beautiful by the kind and unostentatious way in which it was administered. He was interred in the Greyfriars Churchyard. When his body was being lowered into the grave, two mourners were observed to go aside from the company and burst into tears. It was found they were two Episcopal clergymen, whose families, for a considerable time, had been supported by his alms.†

While Carstares was dying the flame of rebellion was spreading through the country. The premature death of Anne had spoiled the plots of the Jacobites, but still they felt that now if ever was the time to make an effort to restore the ancient dynasty. The Earl of Mar, who had been Secretary of State for Scotland during the previous reign, received a commission from the Pretender to be his commander-in-chief in the north, and set up the royal stan-

* Acts of Assembly, pp. 496–98.

† See his Life by M'Cormick.

dard among the hills of Braemar. The Marquises of Huntly and Tullibardine, the Earls of Marischal and Southesk, hastened to join him. The Highland clans, faithful to their old allegiance, were speedily in motion, and in a few weeks more entered Perth nine thousand strong.

It was intended that there should have been a simultaneous rising in the west and north of England; but the activity of the government arrested some of the leading Jacobites and struck terror into the rest, so that when the Duke of Ormond landed on the west coast, he was refused a night's lodgings in a country where he had expected to find an army able to set up a fallen throne. In Northumberland, however, the Jacobite leaders collected a considerable body of cavalry, and a detachment of Highlanders was despatched by the Earl of Mar to their assistance; but divided counsels prevented decisive action, and they were soon compelled to surrender to the king's forces at Preston.

Meantime the Duke of Argyle placed himself at the head of the royalist forces in Scotland, and took up his position at Stirling, to prevent the passage of the Forth. On the 11th of November the Earl of Mar advanced upon Auchterarder, and next day continued his march toward Stirling, with the view of forcing a passage over the bridge. The duke, instead of waiting his coming, boldly crossed the river with an army not four thousand strong; and on the 13th the hostile columns met at Sheriffmuir, close by Dunblane. The right wing of the rebels chased the left wing of the royalists into Stirling; the right wing of the royalists chased the left wing of the rebels till further pursuit was stayed by the Water of Allan. Either side was both victorious and vanquished at the same time; and the battle, though bloody, was afterwards made the subject of mirth. During the night succeeding it Mar fled to Perth, and on the next day Argyle returned to Stirling.

On Christmas Day the Pretender landed at Peterhead, attended by a few friends. The Episcopal clergy in the north had begun to mention him in their prayers. Some of them now hastened to present him with an humble address, owning him as their only king. A day of thanksgiving for his

safe landing was fixed, and set forms of prayer prescribed ;* but the prince himself scrupulously avoided being present at the Protestant service. As the villages which lay between the hostile camps were thought to favour the Royalist cause, it was determined to purge them by fire. Crieff, Auchterarder, Dunning, Muthill, were given to the flames. When the Highlanders were setting fire to the manse of Muthill, the minister's grandmother was just at the point of death. The minister came out and told the incendiaries what was going on within, and begged them to forbear ; but the torch was applied, and while the old woman was being carried to the door in blankets, she breathed her last. They laid her down upon the snow which thickly covered the ground, and there stretched her out, as in a winding-sheet.†

A.D. 1716. Toward the end of January, the Duke of Argyle found himself strong enough to advance upon Perth. Upon his approach the Pretender retired to Montrose ; and, seeing that his fortunes were desperate, he took shipping and sailed for France. The main body of his army fled to the North; and on reaching Badenoch it broke up, and every man shifted for himself. So ended the Rebellion of 1715.

At this testing time the Presbyterians proved their attachment to the house of Hanover. They felt that their religion depended on the issue. Notwithstanding the dissatisfaction which still continued regarding the Union, very few of them joined the rebels. Scarcely a single minister gave them the benefit of his prayers, saving a few who did it to save their lives. Even the M'Millanites, notwithstanding their repeated testimonies against uncovenanted kings,

* A Collection of Original Letters and Authentick Papers relating to the Rebellion in 1715. Edinburgh, 1730. The following is a specimen of the prayers. The rubric is—" Instead of the first collect for morning prayer shall be used this following:"—" O Lord God of our salvation, who hast been exceeding gracious to this land, and by Thy miraculous providence hast delivered Thy servant, our dread sovereign King James, from all the snares and conspiracies laid against his most precious life by unnatural and blood-thirsty men, and hast preserved him in the dangers of the deep, and brought him safely into his own dominions, to the comfort of all those who, in obedience to Thy Holy Word, fear God and honour the king," &c. &c.

† Wodrow's Correspondence, vol. ii. pp. 136, 137.

talked of taking arms, if need were, in defence of the government, provided they were allowed to fight by themselves, and not brought into sinful association with malignants.* When all was over, and the Assembly met in May amid profound peace, an address was voted to his Majesty, couched in more florid terms than usually characterizes such stately productions.†

As many of the Episcopal clergy had openly taken part with the Pretender, they could scarcely expect to escape the punishments which await the vanquished. Those of them who occupied parish churches were summoned before their presbyteries and deposed. Those of them who worshipped in meeting-houses were brought before the magistrates. Their chapels were shut, and themselves in many cases thrown into prison. The Oaths of Allegiance and Abjuration were pressed imperatively upon all; and those who refused to take them were declared to be unqualified to exercise any of their sacred functions, and a heavy blow was thus given to Episcopacy, whose cause was now nearly as forlorn as was that of the prince it had so faithfully served.‡ But we must now turn to other subjects.

* Wodrow's Correspondence, vol. ii.

† "Safe under your Majesty's happy government," said the thankful divines, "we can look back on the blackest scenes of the late unnatural treason —we can see Rome in league with the enemy of our Church and State, sowing the seeds of rebellion, souring the minds of the heedless people with groundless jealousies, plotting the destruction of your royal person, on which our happiness, with that of the Protestant Churches, under God, doth depend, and breaking out at last into open war, with such multitudes of armed traitors as seemed for a season irresistible; and at the same time we can view with pleasure Heaven interposing in your Majesty's behalf and in ours, seating your Majesty so seasonably on the throne, early disclosing the hidden treason, guiding your Majesty's steady counsels, leading your victorious general, the Duke of Argyle, to the unexpected overthrow of such unequal numbers, and conducting him in the pursuit of the Pretender to your crown, till by an inglorious flight he left our country free from the great dangers we were in by the Rebellion, and his deluded friends filled with confusion." (Acts of Assembly, p. 570.)

‡ Following up these measures, an act was passed in April 1719, "For making more effectual the laws appointing the oaths for the security of the government to be taken by ministers of churches and meeting-houses within Scotland." By this act, every Episcopal minister performing divine service in any meeting-house, without having taken the oaths in the terms of the Toleration Act, and praying for King George and the royal family by name, was

The Church of Scotland allows little latitude of belief within her pale. Her creed descends to the minutest particulars; and the slightest deviation from it infers deposition. The Church of Rome has cherished in her bosom children of different forms and different features—the Scotists and Thomists, the Jansenists and Molinists—such men as Contarini, and such as Tetzel. The Church of England has been almost as catholic. It has been said of her that she has a Calvinistic creed, a Romish liturgy, and an Arminian clergy. Her maxim seems to be that the basis must be wide if the building would be high. Accordingly, among the divines who have eaten at her table, and been honoured with her smiles, there are some who, with Popish names, would pass for Popish priests; others who have taught an uncompromising Calvinism; others who have been the stoutest defenders of Arminius; others who have written in defence of Arianism; others who have held a creed purely negative. But not so with the Church of Scotland. All her ministers speak precisely the same things. The mind of each one presents a perfect impression of the Westminster Divines. Notwithstanding the independence of the Scotch intellect, it has seldom been exercised upon forms of faith. Notwithstanding the free scope of its metaphysics, the region of theology has been carefully avoided. Notwithstanding the schisms which have taken place, heresy has never been able to lift up her head. Every Scotsman you meet with, in whatever corner of the globe it may be, is sure to be rigidly orthodox. Amid all the winds of doctrine which have blown since the Reformation, the Church has been kept steadily at her moorings by the weight of her anchorage.

But notwithstanding this marvellous uniformity of faith, the Church judicatories have required, in a few instances, to deal with heresy. One of these instances occurred at this period. Rumours had got afloat that John Simson, Professor of Divinity in the University of Glasgow, was

to suffer six months' imprisonment, and to have his meeting-house shut up for the same period. The Episcopal clergy did not comply with this law, but still they and their meeting-houses were connived at by the government.

teaching Arminianism. This was polluting the stream at the fountain-head. The Presbytery of Glasgow, where Simson appears to have been liked, did not meddle with the matter; but Mr Webster, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, zealous for the purity of doctrine, brought the reports which were in circulation before the Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale. He afterwards called the attention of the Assembly of 1714 to the subject, and was instructed by it to table his complaint before the Presbytery of Glasgow, of which Simson was a member. He did so; and the Professor of Divinity gave in answers to his charges.* The whole matter was again brought up before the Assembly which met in 1715, where it excited a good deal of debate; but finally a committee of thirty ministers and six elders was appointed to investigate the truth of the charges, with instructions as to how they were to proceed. They were to separate the alleged heretical propositions into three classes: those which were contrary to the Word of God and Confession; those which were controverted by orthodox divines, and not determined by the Confession; and those which were not clearly contained either in the Scriptures or the writings of orthodox divines. They were to ask Mr Simson what he denied, and what he was anxious to qualify. They were to allow both parties to lead proof, and to distinguish between things taught by Mr Simson in the school and things emitted by him in private conversation.†

The Rebellion interrupted the labours of this committee, so that they were not able to bring their investigations to a close before the Assembly met in 1716. But in 1717 they presented their report. It appeared that Simson strongly declared his adherence to every article of the Confession of Faith, and that, instead of believing the errors charged upon him in the libel, he had often refuted them, and was ready to refute them again. There were, however, in his printed answers, and other documents which were produced in evidence, several expressions indicative of a laxity of opinion, inconsistent with strict orthodoxy. The Assembly was perplexed as to what should be done. The process had

* Wodrow's Correspondence, vol. ii. † Acts of Assembly, pp. 500, 501.

long been in dependence, and must now be brought to an issue. They finally agreed to a resolution which vindicated the doctrine of the Church, and at the same time put the most charitable construction upon the sentiments of the professor. They found that he had used some expressions capable of a heterodox meaning; and they therefore prohibited him from using any such expressions in the future.*

Though there had been a good deal of angry discussion before this resolution was come to, it was, in the end, carried with perfect unanimity. The friends of Mr Simson gave their consent to it with reluctance: his enemies spoke of a secession from the Church if anything less were resolved upon. The general impression was, that it was at least sufficiently severe. "In the west country," says Wodrow, writing from the Assembly to his wife at Eastwood, "the act will appear harsh on Mr Simson." "I wish Mr Webster do not triumph upon it. He complained a little after the sentence that more was not done. Mr Simson said nothing, and was the wiser." †

The same Assembly which passed this sentence upon Simson had another fine point in divinity to solve, brought up by complaint from the presbytery of Auchterarder. Auchterarder spreads out her dependent parishes in one of the most beautiful, and, till recently, one of the most sequestered districts of Scotland. The Ochils stand like a verdant wall to the south; away to the north and west, the Grampians lift up their broad, brawny backs; and between, Strathearn stretches out her fields, covered with wood, waving with corn, and dotted with villages. This is the territory sacred to Auchterarder. One should have thought that in a scene so rural and so remote, the din of polemics would never have been heard; and yet no presbytery in the land has been more mixed up with the struggles and strifes of ecclesiastical parties. In the days of the Covenant's greatness, some of the brethren had ventured to doubt the wisdom of a Warning and Declaration, in which the Assembly had bearded the parliament, and declined to read it from their

* Acts of Assembly, p. 518.

† Wodrow's Correspondence, vol. ii. pp. 263–69.

pulpits. For this one of them was compelled to confess his fault on his bended knees before the Assembly; the others were rebuked; and the Laird of Ardoch, a venerable old gentleman, was spared on account of his former zeal. "The Presbytery of Auchterarder was under the rod," writes Baillie, triumphantly, "to be made an example to all who would be turbulent."* In these latter days it has acquired a celebrity wider still, connected with a movement in which the enthusiasm of the Covenanting period was revived, and when presbyteries were obliged to choose whether they would be beaten by the rod of the Assembly, or the rod of the Court of Session.

It was the fate of this presbytery to be rebuked by the Assembly in 1717, as it had been rebuked in 1649. A William Craig had appeared before them, and having undergone his probationary trials, was licensed to preach. But this done, as the opinions of Simson were everywhere talked of, and every young man was suspected of being tinged with them, the presbytery resolved to sift their licentiate; and, to make matters sure, they took down his answers to the queries in the form of a credo. One of these was, "I believe that it is not sound and orthodox to teach that we must forsake sin in order to our coming to Christ, and instating us in covenant with God." Wodrow says that this proposition had made a dreadful noise, that it had found its way to London, and was talked of in the coffee-houses there as something horrible.† The young man signed what was afterwards tauntingly called the Auchterarder Creed; but he had wavered somewhat in his answers; it was said he was both ignorant and weak, and the presbytery refused him an extract of his license. He appealed to the General Assembly.

This was a curious subject for an ecclesiastical court, and it excited an animated debate. It was argued, on the one hand, that it was the height of presumption in a presbytery to impose doctrinal formulas different from those which the Church had received; and, moreover, that the article of this new creed brought before them was quite indefensible. It was maintained, on the other hand, that the whole thing had arisen

* Letters, vol. ii. p. 91. † Correspondence, vol. ii. p. 269.

from the presbytery's zeal for purity of doctrine, and that, though the proposition was capable of a bad sense, it was also capable of a good one.* The Assembly at length came to a resolution, prohibiting Auchterarder or any other presbytery to require subscriptions to any formulas except those approved of by the Assembly, and declaring their abhorrence of the proposition referred to "as unsound and most detestable." They further appointed the presbytery to be cited before the Commission, in order that they might explain what they meant by the proposition which they had required their licentiate to subscribe.†

As might have been expected, when the presbytery appeared they put such a sense upon their proposition as was considered satisfactory.‡ The disagreement had arisen about a form of words rather than a form of faith. The presbytery meant that in coming to Christ we come with all our sins, that by Him we may be at once pardoned and purified; for if we renounced our sins before coming to Christ, what were the use of coming at all. The Assembly considered the proposition as implying that it was not necessary a man should abandon sin in order to be a Christian—that he might be in his sins and yet be in Christ. The presbytery and Assembly together had got into the same entanglement as the divines who have disputed whether repentance or faith comes first in the history of conversion. If you say, repentance; you are told that without faith, repentance is impossible; if you say, faith, you are told that that implies a man may be a believer in Christ without having yet repented of his sins. The only solution of the difficulty is, that the two things are simultaneous; that, in fact, the turning from sin is the turning to Christ; and this is the solution of the Auchterarder proposition too.

Unfortunately, these doctrinal disagreements did not end here. The affairs of Glasgow and of Auchterarder were but skirmishes; the battle was yet to be fought. Sitting in the Assembly-house after the condemnation of the Auchterarder proposition, the Rev. Thomas Boston, well known as the

* Wodrow's Correspondence, vol. ii. p. 270.

† Acts of Assembly, p. 519.

‡ Ibid. p. 552.

author of the "Fourfold State," happened to mention to Mr Drummond of Crieff, who sat beside him, the "Marrow of Modern Divinity," as a book which discussed excellently well the topics which had been started in the debate. Mr Drummond managed to procure a copy of the book, and was so pleased with it that he recommended it to others. As it had become scarce, the friends resolved upon a republication of it, as the most effective way of propagating the opinions which they held, and Mr Hog of Carnock undertook to write a recommendatory preface. This edition of the "Marrow" appeared in 1718, and instantly attracted attention. It is necessary we should give some account of it.

The "Marrow of Modern Divinity" was the work of Edward Fisher, a gentleman-commoner of Brazennose College, and was first published in 1646. It is in the form of a dialogue, and is divided into two parts. The first part is "touching both the covenant of works and the covenant of grace;" and the dialogue is conducted by Evangelista, a minister of the gospel; Nomista, a Legalist; Antinomista, an Antinomian; and Neophitus, a young Christian. The second part is "touching the most plain, pithy, and spiritual exposition of the Ten Commandments;" and here the dialogue is carried on between Evangelista, a minister of the gospel; Nomologista, a prattler about the law; Neophitus, a young Christian. Evangelista is the principal speaker, the other disputants refer their differences to him, and he is to be considered as speaking the sentiments of the author.* The book was designed to refute the errors of both Nomians and Antinomians; to show the covenant of works and the covenant of grace—the law and the gospel, in their true relative position; and being characterized by learning, logical ability, and piety, it has been useful to many Christians.

The book, at this period, was little known in Scotland; but Boston, when minister of Simprin, in Berwickshire, had chanced to light upon a copy in a farmhouse in his parish, and taking it home had received from its perusal clearer views of the gospel than he had hitherto had. This was sixteen

* Only the first part was published with Hog's preface. Boston afterwards published the whole work with ample notes.

or seventeen years before the Auchterarder proposition was agitated, but it then recurred to his recollection as the best antidote that could be furnished for the poison which he believed was spreading in the Church.*

In the same year in which the "Marrow" was published, Mr Drummond of Crieff was brought before his presbytery for a sermon which he had preached at the induction of a minister at Auchterarder, in which it was alleged he had taught gross Antinomianism. It was said he affirmed that new obedience was not absolutely necessary to eternal life; that it was wrong to clog the gospel offer by qualifications in the sinner; that the gospel had no precepts and no threatenings; that faith and repentance were commands of the law; and that others beside believers had a right to gospel blessings.† The matter was subsequently brought before the Synod of Perth and Stirling, where Mr Drummond made such explanations as saved him from censure; but he and others were warned to guard against such expressions as he had used in the future.‡ It was alleged by his opponents that he had frequently contradicted himself, and did not himself understand what he preached. "I find," wrote Patrick Coupar of Pittenweem to Wodrow, "that there is among us such a prodigious itch after error—the common plague of the Reformed Churches—that unless effectual remedy be timeously applied, such tares are like to spring up and spread among us. There are few of the presbyters of Stirling and Auchterarder but are for Messrs Hog, Webster, and Hamilton's doctrine, though I believe none of the three will own Mr Drummond's creed, who is but a very ordinary man, for I knew him full well. He has nothing of a scholar, though I truly believe him a good man."§

The famous Marrow controversy was now fairly begun, and early in 1719, Hog of Carnock found it necessary to publish a defence of the book he had recommended. This

* A very full account of the Marrow controversy will be found in the Christian Instructor for 1830, 1831, written by Dr M'Crie. Of course it is tinged with the learned author's peculiar views. See also Boston's Memoirs.

† Wodrow's Correspondence, vol. ii. p. 399. ‡ Ibid. p. 508.

§ Ibid. p. 452.

pamphlet had hardly got into circulation when Principal Haddow of St Andrews, in a sermon preached before the Synod of Fife, made an assault on the "Marrow." The Synod requested him to publish his sermon, which he did, and Hog was not slow to reply to it. The Church of Scotland was now for the first, and almost for the last time, divided upon a point of doctrine. The Auchterarder proposition was regarded as the root of the matter.

When the Assembly met in May, no specific mention was made of the "Marrow," or the controversy it had originated, but the commission was specially instructed to inquire if the prohibition of the Auchterarder proposition was observed throughout the Church, if any books or pamphlets bearing upon the subject, and contrary to the Confession of Faith, had been published, and if so, to call the authors or recommenders of such works before them to answer for their conduct.* This was ominous of what was to come.

In compliance with their instructions, the Commission appointed "a committee for preserving the purity of doctrine," which met at Edinburgh, and appointed a sub-committee which was to meet at St Andrews. The committee summoned Hog of Carnock, Warden of Gargunnock, Brisbane of Stirling, and Hamilton of Airth, who were all suspected of being tinged with the "Marrow" heresy, and questioned them in regard to their views; and their answers were thought satisfactory.† But while the committee were examining the abettors of the book, the sub-committee were examining the book itself, and extracting from it heterodox propositions to be afterwards submitted to the Assembly.

The month of May 1720 came round, and again the Assembly sat down. At its fourth session the committee for preserving purity of doctrine laid its report on the table, containing the passages which had been culled from the "Marrow of Divinity." These were arranged under four distinct heads, to prove that the book contained five distinct heresies:—That assurance was of the nature of faith; that the atonement was universal; that holiness was not

* Acts of the Assembly, pp. 531, 532. † Boston's Memoirs.

necessary to salvation; that the fear of punishment and the hope of reward were not allowed to be motives of a believer's obedience; and that the believer is not under the law as a rule of life. The committee also drew the attention of the Assembly to six Antinomian paradoxes defended in the "Marrow," by the application of a distinction drawn between the law of works and the law of Christ. The paradoxes were—"A believer is not under the law, but is altogether delivered from it." "A believer doth not commit sin." "The Lord can see no sin in a believer." "The Lord is not angry with a believer for his sins." "A believer hath no cause, neither to confess his sins, nor to crave pardon at the hand of God for them, neither to fast nor mourn, nor humble himself before the Lord for them." Beside the passages quoted in support of the five heretical propositions, the report mentioned some others equally objectionable, as—"A minister that does not persuade sinners to believe their sins are pardoned before he sees their lives reformed, for fear they should take more liberty to sin, is ignorant of the mystery of faith;" and, "Nor yet, as touching your justification and eternal salvation, will he love you ever a whit the less, though you commit never so many or great sins."*

The committee's report was allowed to lie upon the table for some days, that it might be maturely considered, and then, after very little debate, the Assembly declared the passages quoted from the "Marrow" to be contrary to Scripture and the Confession of Faith, and therefore charged all the ministers of the Church, instead of recommending the book, to warn their parishioners against it. In the whole Assembly only four men were found to oppose this resolution.

The controversy, however, was not to end here. Though the Marrow party was small, it embraced several men of talents and determination, who would not, even at the bidding of the Assembly, renounce the views they conscientiously held. The act of Assembly was discussed in presbyteries and private circles, in letters and in conversations. On the one hand, it was declared to be unjust to judge a book by a few detached sentences picked out of its pages by enemies,

* Acts of Assembly, pp. 534–36.

and separated from the context. On the other hand, it was maintained that a perusal of the whole book would justify the fairness of the committee, and show that it contained the doctrines which were imputed to it, and more especially that its tendency was toward Antinomianism. Some of the discussions assumed all the subtlety of those subtle discussions about sufficient grace which are treated by Pascal in his "Provincial Letters" with such grave irony. In the "Marrow" it is taught that "the moral law may be either said to be the matter of the law of works, or the matter of the law of Christ. As it is the matter of the law of works, it ought not to be a rule of life to a believer; as it is the matter of the law of Christ, it ought to be a rule of life to a believer." To many men this seemed to be no better than the affirmation that the same thing ought to be and not to be at the same time. Wodrow refined still farther, and declared that he could condemn this proposition, "As the law is the Covenant of Works, the believer is wholly delivered from it;" but not this one, "A believer is wholly delivered from the law, as it's a covenant of works."*

A number of ministers, admirers of the "Marrow," resolved to make an effort to have the obnoxious act of Assembly repealed. With this end, they drew up a representation, begging the Assembly to reconsider its decision, and gave it in to the Committee of Bills for transmission to the Assembly, which had met in May 1721. This representation was signed by twelve men, who were henceforward called, sometimes the Representers, and sometimes the Marrow Men. They were—James Hog of Carnock, Thomas Boston of Ettrick, John Williamson of Inveresk, John Bonar of Torphichen, Gabriel Wilson of Maxton, James Kid of Queensferry, Ebenezer Erskine of Portmoak, Ralph Erskine of Dunfermline, James Wardlaw of Dunfermline, Henry Davidson of Galashiels, James Bathgate of Orwell, and William Hunter of Lilliesleaf.†

Such were the twelve apostles of the Modern Divinity.

* Correspondence, vol. ii. p. 553.

† A copy of this representation will be found in Struthers's History of Scotland, vol. i. pp. 498–506.

We at once see that there were amongst them some men who have achieved for themselves a long-lived renown. Thomas Boston had composed, amid the pastoral scenery of the Ettrick, his "Fourfold State," so valued at many cottage firesides still. He had published it just a year before the time we speak of, and already his publisher was pressing him to prepare a second edition for the press. James Hog is described as a man of great learning and singular piety, but withal he was a keen controversialist. His style, however, is clumsy, which he himself was wont to excuse by reminding his critics that he had spent many years upon the Continent before being settled at Carnock, and had learned to think and speak in a foreign tongue. But Ebenezer and Ralph Erskine stand out in bold relief from all the others, not as the writers of anything memorable, but as the authors of a Secession, and the founders of a Church which now estimates its adherents at half a million.

While the Assembly of 1721 was sitting, the Royal Commissioner took ill: it was with difficulty he could be present; and as no one cared to revive the old disputes about the Church's independent powers,* an adjournment took place, and the business still undisposed of was referred to the Commission. Among other matters thus left over was the representation of the Marrow Men. The Commission, however, met on the very day after the Assembly was dissolved, so that no time was lost. The representation occupied a considerable part of several days, and there were several stout joists between the theological foemen. Boston afterwards wrote in his Memoirs, "Mr Williamson did, in a point of debate, fairly lay Mr Allan Logan, minister of Culross, and I was encouraged by the success of an encounter

* It appears from Wodrow's Correspondence, however, that there were some private grumblings on this subject. "I find," says he, "some dislike our rising thus, without asserting our power to sit without a Commissioner; but others see no ground for such an assertion, when Providence cleared our way by laying affliction on him. It had been cruelty to have pressed his being with us any longer; and it's a mercy we have a king who countenances us and a Commissioner so long. There was not the least motion of this in public." (See vol. ii. p. 583.) Boston appears to have been one of those who had this secret grudge. (See his Memoirs.)

with Principal Haddow."* The other party, however, did not acknowledge the prowess of their opponents, for they persisted in the belief that the "Marrow" had been righteously condemned.

The Representers, besides asking the Assembly to repeal its act condemning the "Marrow" as derogatory to gospel truth, themselves ventured to condemn an act of the Assembly touching the preaching of catechetical doctrine. This was carrying the war into the enemies' country. In this act ministers were enjoined to insist, in their catechetical sermons, "upon the great and fundamental truths according to our Confession of Faith and Catechisms, such as that of the Being and Providence of God, and the Divine authority of the Holy Scriptures, the necessary doctrine of the everblessed Trinity, in the Unity of the Godhead, particularly of the eternal Deity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and of the satisfaction to Divine justice made by Him who is our only propitiation, of regeneration by efficacious grace, of free justification through our blessed surety, the Lord Jesus Christ, received by faith alone, and of the necessity of a holy life in order to the obtaining of everlasting happiness."† These words sound like the words of men zealous for the purity of the faith; but the Marrow Men thought they discovered heresy in them, for they made no special mention of Christ's imputed righteousness, and they made holiness essential to salvation, "which they conceived to be of very dangerous consequence unto the doctrine of free grace."

All this had at first caused a good deal of bitterness, as mutual suspicions and recriminations are sure to do; but before the Assembly again met, men's minds had time to grow calm. In May 1722, the whole matter was brought before the Church, met in its supreme judicatory, by a report from the Commission, in which they recommended the Assembly to adhere to its Act of 1720, and to censure the Representers for the groundless aspersions they had cast upon the Church. From this resolution only one member of the Commission had dissented. In the Assembly the

* Boston's Memoirs, p. 373. † Acts of Assembly, p. 538.

subject was keenly contested. The battle was fought before a small committee, before a committee of the whole House, before the House itself. A great part of the Assembly's time was occupied with it. "Many speeches," says Wodrow, "were made before they (the Marrow Men) came in, as to their good disposition; but little of it appeared."* At length the Assembly came to a vote, and, by a hundred and thirty-four against five, accepted the report of the commission, with a few alterations, and converted it into an act.

It is an operose document, occupying eight closely printed pages. It fortifies the orthodoxy of the Assembly of 1720 by quotations from the Confession of Faith and Catechisms; it rebuts the assertions of the Representation; it vindicates the Act anent Catechetical Doctrine; and "considering that the brethren's desire that the Act 1720 should be repealed is unjust, the Assembly does refuse the same: and because of the injurious reflections contained in their representation, as above mentioned, the Assembly do appoint their Moderator, in their name, to rebuke and admonish them; and though their offence deserves a much higher censure, yet the Assembly forbears it, in hopes that the great lenity used towards them shall engage them to a more dutiful behaviour in time coming."† The Marrow Men stood the rebuke, and then protested in the hands of a notary.

A Church which allowed some latitude of belief to its members would not have meddled with the "Marrow of Modern Divinity." If that celebrated treatise diverges from the standard of orthodoxy, it is only by a hairbreadth. It certainly delights in scholastic distinctions and startling paradoxes, and in detached passages speaks as if a believer's moral conduct were of no account; but those passages are corrected by others, and the difference appears to lie more in the statement of truth than in the truth itself. Still the Church was merciful in its judgments. It condemned the book; it did not depose the men who were known to have imbibed its sentiments. There have been Assemblies, both before and since, which would not have made such a distinction. Even afterwards, when the Marrow Men not only

* Correspondence, vol. ii. p. 646. † Acts of Assembly, pp. 548-56.

professed openly their admiration of a book which the Church had condemned, but ventured to challenge the orthodoxy of the Church itself, they were only rebuked. To have done anything, the Assembly could not have done less.

But it has been affirmed in our own day, that it was because the Church had become latitudinarian that it hated the "Marrow;" and that this latitudinarianism is to be traced to the admission of so many of the Prelatic curates into the ecclesiastical judicatories. They who make such a statement have mistaken the spirit of that time. The old jealousy between the Episcopalian and the Presbyterian had not yet died out. There were curates in the Church, but they exercised no influence in its judicatories. When they appeared before an ecclesiastical court, it was generally that they might be deposed for some alleged misdemeanour. At the very time the Marrow controversy was raging, the Episcopalians were under the ban for their connection with the still recent rebellion, and bitter things were everywhere said of them. To suppose that such men had such influence as to turn the Church out of the old doctrinal paths is sheer nonsense. Wodrow was at that very time publishing his History of the Church's Sufferings, and Wodrow was against the Marrow Men, though the personal friend of some of them; —was the leaven of Episcopacy working in him? In one Assembly only four men, and in another only five, could be found to side with Boston, notwithstanding Boston's great reputation, so that if a defection there were, it must have been very sudden, very complete, and very causeless. We shall come nearer the truth by ascribing the movement to an actual zeal for the purity of doctrine, though men may still differ as to whether that zeal was according to knowledge.

CHAPTER X.

The decision of the Assembly in 1722 did not terminate the Marrow controversy. Among the Marrow Men was Gabriel Wilson, minister of Maxton. This Gabriel was chosen Moderator of his synod, while discussion ran high, and ventured in his synodical sermon to broach his peculiar opinions. His brethren naturally took offence at this, and a process was instituted against him. His sermon, which was afterwards published under the title of "The Trust," was before four synods, before as many synodical committees, before the Commission of the Assembly, and, finally, before the Assembly itself in 1723. During the whole course of this process Boston strenuously defended his friend.* The reference from the synod to the Assembly embraced three articles which Wilson was accused of erroneously teaching:— 1. That the moral law to a believer was divested of the curse or threatening of eternal damnation, and had no other sanction but fatherly chastisement. 2. That gospel or saving repentance was not necessary to a sinner, in order to the pardon of his sins in justification. 3. That assurance, or a man's persuasion that he shall be saved by Christ, was of the essence of justifying faith.†

After a debate which occupied five hours, the matter was referred to a committee. Before the committee, Wilson pled that the points of doctrine alluded to were not expressed in his sermon, and that it was only in obedience to the synod's command that he had said anything about them. In regard

* See Boston's Memoirs, pp. 377–83. † Acts of Assembly, p. 565.

to the first proposition, he declared that he did not tenaciously adhere to the expression that the moral law was divested of the threatening of eternal damnation to the believer; and that all he meant was, that a believer, in virtue of his union with Christ, was set free from the curse of the law, and could never for a moment be under condemnation. In regard to the second proposition, he declared it to be his belief that justifying faith and gospel repentance were inseparable, both in their principles and exercise. But being asked if he would own it as a truth, that God did never justify an impenitent sinner, he replied that he could not express himself in these terms, or in any words which might imply that a man was justified by any works of his own, and that to guard against this was the great aim of his sermon. In regard to the third proposition, he declared that he owned everything said in the Confession of Faith and Catechisms; and farther, that he still adhered to the answers given in to the Commission of Assembly in 1721 on that point by the twelve ministers, of whom he was one.*

The committee reported all this to the Assembly, and recommended that, seeing this process had been begun before the decision of the Assembly in 1722, which embraced essentially the same points, Mr Wilson should simply be admonished, and prohibited from using such expressions in the future. The recommendation of the committee was adopted, and Wilson was rebuked at the bar.†

There was another case brought before the Assembly of 1723, which indicated the state of feeling in regard to the "Marrow" doctrines. Mr Hepburn, minister of Torryburn, had received a call to be one of the ministers of Edinburgh; but his translation was opposed, and, amongst other arguments urged against it, was this, that if he were removed the Marrow Men would have a majority in the Presbytery of Dunfermline, and would be able to license young men holding opinions akin to their own, and would, moreover,

* The Commission put twelve queries to the Representers, in order to bring out their peculiar views; and they answered them at great length and with considerable learning. The queries and answers were afterwards published, and are still extant.

† Acts of Assembly, pp. 565, 566.

be able to fill any parishes that became vacant with ministers of a similar kind. To prevent this, the Assembly decided that, if Mr Hepburn were translated, Torryburn should not be provided with a minister but by the advice and with the approbation of the Synod of Fife.*

From this period we hear nothing of the "Marrow" doctrines in the judicatories of the Church; but we know they were not abandoned by the men who had imbibed them. In 1727, Boston published a new edition of the obnoxious treatise, with very copious and elaborate notes, under the feigned name of "Philalethes Irenæus." We cannot doubt but that he and his brethren spoke their sentiments freely in their pulpits. But the judicatories wisely let them alone; the animosity which had been excited gradually decayed; and again the Church had peace.†

The principal subject of discussion in the Assembly of 1724 was the constitution of the Commission. That court is regarded by many even still as of illegitimate birth and doubtful authority. It is recognised in no act of parliament as a judicatory of the Church. When King James VI. was pressing on his Episcopal schemes, he got the Assembly persuaded to appoint a committee to manage the affairs of the Church in the interval of its sessions; and he soon brought this committee completely under his influence. It passed every measure he proposed. It smoothed by every possible means the way for the introduction of Episcopacy. It was tauntingly called the "king's led horse." It was certainly the college of cardinals out of which the Scottish popes were generally chosen. This was the rudimental form of the Commission.

In the period between 1638 and 1650, when the triumphant Covenant was dragging everything at its chariot-wheels, the General Assembly annually appointed a Commission, which always consisted of a specified number of the most eminent ministers and distinguished barons who favoured the good

* Wodrow's Correspondence, vol. iii. p. 51, note.

† History may stoop from her elevated position to notice that the Lord High Commissioner's dinners first began to acquire celebrity this year. Wodrow specially remarks that the Earl of Hopetoun, the Royal Commissioner, kept a plentiful board, and was greatly liked. See Correspondence, vol. iii.

cause. The Commission thus constituted soon rose into dangerous pre-eminence. It wielded all the powers of the Assembly for eleven months of the year. It defied parliaments, browbeat kings, prescribed terms of peace and war, ordered all things. It had not been in existence long till Baillie noted that it was like to become formidable.* When Cromwell put his iron foot on the Assembly, he crushed the Commission too, as a man would crush the parent and its brood.

After the Revolution, when the Assembly began again to meet, it remembered its ancient custom, and nominated a Commission to manage such affairs as it chose to entrust to it. The members of this Commission were yearly specified in an act of the Assembly; and with some men it became an object of ambition to be among the chosen number. During the reign of Queen Anne, when the Tories were in power, and Episcopal counsels in the ascendant, there was some talk of questioning its legality. Though the period of the Assembly's session was not yet limited to ten days, it could not be very protracted; and if the Commission were removed out of the way, it was thought the Assembly would be shorn of one-half of its strength. When churchmen were called to contemplate this possibility, they could plead no act of parliament for their court; but they argued that the sovereign had frequently owned it as lawful, by receiving addresses from it, sending it answers, and giving sanction to its acts; and that, by the Act of Union, the Church's privileges, as well as its judicatories, were preserved.†

So things continued till the time at which we have now arrived. But every year some men who fancied they ought to have been put upon the Commission found themselves overlooked; and every year such men were ready to find fault with things the Commission had done. In the Assembly of 1724, there was a host of grumblers against the Commission, and a host of complaints against its procedure.

* "The Commission from the General Assembly," says he, "which before was of small use, is like to become almost a constant judicatory, and very profitable, but of so high a strain that to some it is terrible already." (Vol. ii. p. 55.)

† Wodrow's Correspondence, vol. iii. p. 136.

This led to a discussion about its constitution. It was maintained that as constituted it was not a fair representation of the Church; that some men were constantly upon it, others never. Several new plans were proposed. It was urged by some that the presbyteries should choose the members of the Commission; but when this was first mooted, Mr Dundas of Arniston, then Lord Advocate, declared that a Commission so chosen would be a new Assembly, and not a Commission; and that while the Church had the king's connivance for its Commissions as hitherto constituted, it need no longer expect it if they were to be so altered. Others proposed that the Assembly's committee for choosing the Commission should be limited to lists given in by the synods at the Assembly; but it was argued that if this plan were adopted, and the committee had no power to alter these lists, there was no need of a committee at all. A third plan was that the committee of the Assembly for nominating the Commission should be made up of one out of every presbytery, chosen by the members of the synod at the Assembly, and it was urged that a committee so constituted would choose a Commission which would fairly represent the whole Church; but arguments were found against this proposal too. A fourth plan was, that the Commission should just be the members of the Assembly turned into a Commission. "This was easily answered," says Wodrow, "and was scarcely insisted on."* What were the arguments which were brought against it he does not inform us; but it is certain that it is in this way the Commission is now constituted, and no practical inconvenience is found to result. There were, in fact, so many objections to every plan that was proposed, that the discussion ended in nothing but the appointment of a Commission, filled with new men, elected upon the old plan. In this way some grumblers were silenced. There was a secret dread that if the Commission were altered, it might fall to pieces in the process.

While the Assembly was sitting, the south country was the scene of agrarian outrage. Some of the landholders had begun for the first time in our country to enclose their

* Wodrow's Correspondence, vol. iii. pp. 134, 135.

fields, and, to accomplish this, were obliged to dispossess some of the peasantry of the small plots of ground which they held. They were the first of those many ejectments which our country has since seen, not so much in the south as the north, and which have in a great measure depopulated large districts of the Highlands, sometimes to enlarge a farm, sometimes to make way for a deer-forest; and now a clump of trees and a heap of stones, frequently occurring in every glen, alone remain to mark out where was once a happy homestead.

The truth is, at the time we speak of, the peasant was beginning to lose his ancient value, and he had not yet acquired his new one. He was no longer required to follow his lord to battle, and to give dignity to his feudal state; and it was found more profitable to grow corn in fenced fields than to have a large retinue of lazy vassals sorning upon the ground and consuming its fruits. The Scottish peasantry of that period were not unlike the Irish peasantry who, till the recent famine, held just as many square yards of soil as would grow enough of potatoes to keep themselves and their families alive. They had had their little holdings from time immemorial, and never dreamt of being dispossessed. Moreover, when ejected, they had no market to which to carry their broad backs and brawny arms, for trade had not yet sprung up, and they saw nothing but starvation for themselves and their little ones. They congregated in crowds, threw down the enclosures, killed the cattle, and frightened the lairds. The Presbytery of Kirkcudbright attempted to quell this riotous disposition by reading a paper from their pulpits, in which they animadverted not only upon the violence of the peasantry, but upon the provocation given them by the proprietors. The attention of the Assembly was called to the document, and the presbytery were enjoined to be cautious in the warnings which they gave, and to impress upon the people the sin of their levelling proceedings. Tranquillity was gradually restored, and the career of agricultural improvement entered upon which has made Scotland, naturally the poorest, one of the best-cultivated countries in Europe.

Meanwhile dissensions were springing up among the Episcopalians. Already dissatisfied with the Anglican liturgy, which was now generally used in their churches, some began to aim at what they considered a more primitive and apostolic service. The "First Book of Edward VI." contained some rites which were afterwards excluded from the liturgy as Romish; but there always had been men in the English Church who regarded these with veneration, and would have used them had the law allowed. The majority of the Nonjuring bishops, cast out of their sees after the Revolution, were men of this stamp; and now that they were no longer tied down by acts of parliament, some of them began to practise usages which they believed to be sanctioned by the earliest liturgies of the Christian Church. These usages were—1. Mixing the wine with water in the Eucharist, in memory of blood and water having issued from our Redeemer's side. 2. Commemorating the faithful departed at the altar. 3. Consecrating the elements by an express invocation of the Holy Ghost. 4. Using a prayer of oblation, in which the consecrated elements are solemnly offered to God as the body and blood of His Son.

Among the Scotch bishops consecrated after the Revolution was the Honourable Archibald Campbell, grand-nephew of the Marquis of Argyle who had played such a conspicuous part in Covenanting times, and who had lost his head for it at the Restoration—such were the changes in those changeful times. This Scotch bishop generally resided in London, as he had no diocese to superintend, and no flock to care for. To London also came Dr James Gadderar, who had been rabbled out of the parish of Kilmaurs. Common sufferings begat common sympathies; Campbell and Gadderar became friends; and as the old Scotch episcopate was dying out, it was resolved to recruit it by the consecration of Gadderar. Campbell, a bishop of the Scotch Church, was already at hand; Falconer, another bishop, happened to come up to London at the time; to these were added Hickes, an English Nonjuror; and by them Gadderar was invested with the episcopal gift. Men learned in the canon law, indeed, said that Falconer and Campbell, being Scotch bishops, and

without authority to exercise their episcopal function in London, could not canonically consecrate there, as it was a rule in the Primitive Church that no bishop could ordain in another's diocese without his consent.* Men whose learning did not go beyond the time in which they lived still farther declared that Hickes was no bishop at all, as he had no consecration but what was received from three Nonjurors, after they were deprived of their bishoprics and others put in their place.† These things made some men think that there was a flaw in the first link of Gadderar's apostolical chain; but still a bishop we may suppose him to be.

Both Campbell and Gadderar associated with the Nonjurors who were attached to the Usages; they imbibed their opinions, and became anxious to have these primitive practices revived in their native country. In 1721 some of the clergy of Aberdeen invited Campbell to be their diocesan. But Campbell appears to have preferred a London life to a life among the cold Presbyterian charities of Aberdeenshire, and instead of going himself he sent Gadderar in his place. Before this some of the bishops, catching the infection which blew from the south, had begun to yearn after what they considered higher and more catholic forms of worship. One had begun to use the liturgy of Laud. Another had poured a little pure water into the Eucharistic wine. A third had added an invocation to the form of consecrating the elements prescribed in the Anglican service.‡ But the arrival of Gadderar in 1722 gave a fresh impulse to this tendency; and the Episcopal community was soon split into two factions, the Usagers and Non-Usagers.

While the few Nonjuring bishops in Scotland and England were thus falling out among themselves, they had on hand no less a project than a union with the Eastern Church, which stretches out its borders over three continents. A certain Arsenius, Metropolitan of Thebais in Egypt, had come to London on a begging expedition; with him Bishop Campbell had

* See Bingham's Antiquities of the Christian Church.

† See Percival's Apology for an Apostolical Succession. Percival argues that Hickes was no bishop.

‡ See Skinner's Ecclesiastical History, vol. ii. Also Stephen, vol. iv.

fallen in, and the Scotch prelate being of a speculative turn of mind, started the subject of a union. Arsenius undertook the necessary negotiations, and when he left the country he carried with him authoritative proposals from the Nonjuring bishops, in which the points both of their agreement and disagreement with the Oriental Church were stated. They declared that they did not allow the same authority to the canons of general councils as to the Sacred Scriptures; that they could not pay any kind of worship to the blessed Virgin; neither could they pray to saints or angels, nor give any religious veneration to images, nor worship the host in the Eucharistic sacrifice. Arsenius returned home by way of Muscovy, and as a political union might be built on a religious one, the Czar Peter was easily engaged in the scheme. The proposals were transmitted to the Eastern Patriarchs, and laid before a synod; and in 1721 "The Answers of the Orthodox in the East to the Proposals sent from Britain for a Union and Agreement with the Oriental Church" arrived. The orthodox Orientals, at great length, and with some acrimony, vindicated the practices of their Church upon the five points of difference, and insisted upon conformity as the foundation of union. This document purported to be drawn up according to "a synodical judgment and determination of the Eastern Church, after the most mature deliberation of the Lord Jeremias, the Most Holy Œcumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, the new Rome, and the Most Holy and Most Blessed Patriarchs, the Lord Samuel of Alexandria, and the Lord Chrysanthus of Jerusalem, with the holy metropolitans and the holy clergy of the Great Church of Christ in Constantinople in council assembled, April 12, 1718."

This answer, though it somewhat damped the hopes of the Nonjurors, did not drive them to despair. They drew out a reply in Greek, Latin, and English. They supported their former positions by arguments from Scripture and the Fathers, but all that they asked was, that the Oriental patriarchs and bishops would authoritatively declare them free in regard to the invocation of saints and angels, the worship of images, and the adoration of the host; if they would only do that, a union might yet be effected. This reply was

despatched to Arsenius, who was still in Moscow, by James, Proto-syncellus of the Church of Alexandria. Both the Czar and Arsenius were zealous for the union, and proposed that two of the British clergy should meet with two of the Russian clergy to confer upon the points in dispute. But while this was being arranged, a final reply arrived from the uncompromising patriarchs. "These doctrines," said they, "have been long since examined, and rightly and religiously defined and settled by the holy œcumenical synods, so that it is neither lawful to add anything to them, nor to take anything from them; therefore they who are disposed to agree with us in the divine doctrines of the orthodox faith must necessarily follow and submit to what has been defined and determined by the ancient Fathers, and by holy and œcumenical synods, from the time of the apostles and their holy successors, the Fathers of our Church, to this time; we say they must submit to them with sincerity and obedience, and without any dispute or scruple; and this is a sufficient answer to what you have written. Done at Constantinople, in the month of September 1723, and signed by Jeremias, by the mercy of God Archbishop of Constantinople, the new Rome, and Œcumenical Patriarch; Athanasius, by the mercy of God Patriarch of the great city of God, Antioch; Chrysanthus, by the mercy of God Patriarch of the holy city Jerusalem; Collinicus, Metropolitan of Heraclea; Auxentius of Cyzicum; Paisius of Nicomedia; Gerasimus of Nice; Parthenius of Chalcedon; Ignatius of Thessalonica; Arsenius of Prusa; Theoctistus of Polypolis; and Callinicus of Varna." Soon after the receipt of this reply, news reached London of the death of the Czar, and the project, quixotic from the first, was blasted for ever.*

But the Scottish bishops, now inhabiting the cold regions of dissent, and contemptuously spurned by the orthodoxy of the East, became a prey to other dissensions besides those to which we have already referred. From the time of the Revolution, the bishops who had been consecrated had been consecrated to no particular dioceses or even districts. They were simply invested with the episcopal office, and they to-

* Skinner's Ecclesiastical History, vol. ii. pp. 634–39.

gether formed an Episcopal College for superintending the affairs of the Church, and continuing the succession. The secret of this was, that they were waiting to have their dioceses assigned them by royal authority when the Stewarts were restored. Though the Pretender was now an exile, without the shadow of authority in the Island, he was yet in the habit of nominating, through his political agent, Lockhart of Carnwath, persons to be bishops; and the Episcopal College respectfully carried out his wishes, though they could not help, on some occasions, intimating that the men he had chosen were scarcely suited for the office.*

There now arose, especially among the bishops and clergy who had adopted the Usages, a spirit of rebellion against this system. They said that since the State had cast them off, they should cast off the State. The Church should shake itself free from all secularism, and assert its independent powers, derived from its Great Head. In primitive times, every bishop had his own diocese; let it be so now. In primitive times, the clergy and people elected their own bishops; let the pious custom be revived. They must not let their loyalty to King James make them traitors to the King Jesus. In the providence of God they had been made free; let them not insanely hug the manacles they had worn in the days of their Egyptian bondage. If they were Erastian once, let them be so no more.

Upon these subjects the Scottish bishops were torn into two hostile factions, and neither the efforts of Lockhart nor the admonitions of the Pretender could heal the breach. The one party were called the College Bishops, the other the Usager Bishops; and every day increased their antagonism. In 1727 the quarrel reached its height, and there was exhibited to the country the unholy spectacle of a Church divided against itself, and either faction attempting to outvote the other by the hurried consecration of partisans. Within a fortnight, no fewer than five men were thus anointed with the consecrating oil. On the 4th of June 1727 the College Bishops were four in number—Freebairn, Duncan, Ochterlonie, and Rose; the Usagers were only

* Lockhart's Papers, vol. ii. *passim.*

three—Gadderar, Millar, and Cant. But on that day the Usagers met by themselves and consecrated Thomas Rattray, a man who had already distinguished himself by his advocacy of their views, and thus made themselves equal in numbers to their opponents. On the 11th the College Bishops, to maintain their superiority, assembled, and received into their number Gillan and Rankin, two men who had been recommended by the Pretender, and were known to be opposed to the Usagers. On the 18th the Usagers, not to be outdone, again met, and invested with the episcopal office William Dunbar, formerly minister of Cruden, and Robert Keith, afterwards distinguished by his valuable "History of the Church." "Thus," says Skinner, "the contention between the College and those who favoured the restoration of the old regular system came to be managed, if not by equal arguments, yet by equal numbers."*

But the history of this eventful month does not end here. On the 28th the College Bishops again took counsel together, and finding that the plan of obtaining an ascendency by new consecrations was a game at which both parties could play, they changed their tactics. They suspended Millar, who had been recognised by the other party as Metropolitan and Vicar-General of the Kingdom, from his episcopal functions, and followed up this stroke on the next day by declaring Rattray and Dunbar to be no bishops.† It was the old contests of Rome about rival popes revived upon a small scale. Such wounds were not easily healed; but death at last decided in favour of the Usagers. The College Scheme fell into disuse, and henceforward every bishop consecrated in Scotland claimed to be a diocesan.

Meantime the Established Church was not free from trouble. Rumours had got abroad that Professor Simson of Glasgow, who was before the Assembly of 1717, charged with teaching Arminianism, was now teaching Arianism. This heresy, which had been condemned in the Council of

* Skinner's Ecclesiastical History, vol. ii. pp. 644, 645. See also Stephen's History, vol. iv.

† Stephen's History, vol. iv.

Nice, and which, for long afterwards, divided the Christian Church, had been recently revived in England by Dr Samuel Clarke, whose great learning, abilities, and benevolence gave weight to his writings. His celebrated treatise, "The Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity," was eagerly read, and admired for its scholarship, even by those who condemned it for its errors.

In this work Clarke teaches that there is but one living and intelligent Being, self-existent and independent, the source of all other being. With Him there has existed from the beginning a Second Divine Person, who is His Word or Son; and a Third Divine Person, who is His Holy Spirit. The Son derived His being and attributes from the Father, and that not by necessity of nature, but by an act of the Father's incomprehensible will. The Scriptures say nothing either about the manner or the time of the derivation, and therefore they are guilty of presumption who affirm either that the Son was eternally begotten, or that there was a time when the Son was not. In like manner the Spirit derived His existence from the Father, but how or when we know not. Christ was called God, not on account of His metaphysical nature, but on account of His divine attributes and authority communicated to Him by the Father. The one God acted in and through Him. Dr Clarke was therefore rather a semi-Arian than an Arian. Agreeing with the Homoiousians of the Primitive Church, he avoided calling Christ a creature, but he denied that He was God by necessity of nature.

Dr Waterland came forth as the successor of Athanasius, and the champion of the Nicene Creed. He argued that the Three Divine Persons were homoousian or consubstantial, or, as it is expressed in the Confession of Faith, "of one substance." But Dr Clarke and his adherents remarked that that phrase was ambiguous; that it meant either one numerical substance, or one generic substance; that if the former was intended, the personality of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost was destroyed, and Sabellianism introduced; that if the latter was designed, the unity of the Godhead was destroyed, for three persons having the same substance in kind have

each of them his own substance, and are in reality three beings.*

The contagion of Dr Clarke's heresy reached beyond the Tweed, and the Professor of Divinity in the University of Glasgow was infected by it. Professor Simson was at this time a man of nearly sixty, and in very delicate health. He was fond of abstruse speculation, and easily led away by opinions which wore a philosophic air. But if he had great receptivity, he had little tenacity. He had none of the martyr-like devotion to his creed which would have led him to die for it. He rather held it with the easy indifference of an Epicurean, who inquires rather than believes. His mind was acute rather than comprehensive, and he was altogether lacking in that high principle which gives dignity to character, and calls forth admiration even for the erring. He was, moreover, somewhat irritable, and inclined to treat with contempt country ministers as men who had never trodden the transcendental regions of pure thought.

Several presbyteries overtured the Assembly of 1726 to inquire into the rumours which were afloat. In accordance with these, the General Assembly, through its Committee of Instructions, called upon the commissioners from the Presbytery of Glasgow to give an account of what they knew about these reports, and of what they had done in regard to them. The commissioners stated that their presbytery had heard whispers of unsound sentiments being uttered from the Divinity Chair in their University; that they had sent two of their number to confer with the Professor; that the Professor had written a letter to them acknowledging that he was aware of such reports being in circulation, but declaring them to be false and calumnious, and stating what it was he had really taught in regard to the Trinity. This letter, it was farther stated, had been remitted to a committee for consideration, but they had not as yet made any report upon it. On hearing this statement, the Assembly appointed the

* Principal Hill remarks, that the Ancients appear to have meant by *homoousian*, a generical identity of substance; and the Moderns a numerical identity. See Lectures, vol. i. p. 466. We shall see that the divines of the Scottish Church insisted on a numerical identity.

presbytery to proceed with all diligence in their inquiry and nominated an influential committee to correspond with it, and give it their assistance in conducting the investigation.*

The presbytery and committee were soon at work. Three methods of investigation lay open to them:—They might question the Professor; they might examine his letter to the presbytery; they might precognosce the students who had attended his lectures. But Simson protested strongly against the first method as inquisitorial, and as contrary to the maxims of law, which shield a man from being compelled to criminate himself. In regard to the second method, the letter was capable of bearing different senses, which, as Lord Grange remarked, was "the art of teaching heresy orthodoxly."† The third method was not without its peculiar difficulties too. The students in general showed a disinclination to say much. They pled that they could not remember the very words spoken by their Professor after the lapse of a year. We shall excuse them more readily when we know that the prelections were at that time delivered in Latin; and though divinity students then were much better versed in that language than their successors of the present day, it is difficult to believe that they could follow the niceties of a metaphysical discussion so accurately as they could in their mother-tongue. "Most of them," says Wodrow, who was a member of the Assembly's committee, "were young, raw lads, who I believe did not really understand what Mr Simson had taught."

However, a precognition of the students was tried, and was not altogether fruitless. One lad declared that when the Professor was explaining the subject of creation, and speaking about Marck's argument in his "Medulla Theologiæ" against the eternity of the world—viz., that if it were eternal it would be necessarily self-existent—he declared the argument unsound, and gave this as his reason: Christus est eternus, quamvis not existat necessario. Another stated that the Professor, in speaking of the Son's independency,

* Acts of Assembly, p. 592.

† Wodrow's Correspondence, vol. iii. p. 261.

said, "We know not these things, and these terms are very impertinent, and should not be used in talking of the Trinity." Others said, that in commenting upon a definition given by Aristotle, the Professor had remarked that the unity of essence in the Trinity could not mean numerical essence; for if They were numerically one in substance, They could not be three distinct persons. While things were thus far advanced, Simson gave in a paper containing a general answer to some questions which had been put to him, in which he gave a long account of the Arian and Sabellian heresies; declared that of late he had seen the need of quitting all hypotheses for explaining the doctrine of the Trinity, and of restricting himself to the phrases used in Scripture and the Standards of the Church; and that he was surprised to find himself suspected of denying the Son's necessary existence, as he had taught that He had all life in Himself, and was infinite and eternal in His being, wisdom, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth.

The presbytery were not satisfied with the Professor's explanations, and resolved to proceed against him by libel; but when the evidence was being led, the lawyers, who had now come upon the field, insisted upon the students swearing to the *ipsissima verba* of the Professor, and argued that if they did not, they were constituting themselves judges and not witnesses, and might be assigning a meaning to statements which was never intended. Every inch of ground was keenly contested; every student who had a memory for Latin paragraphs, and a metaphysical genius to understand them, was unmercifully cross-questioned; days upon days were thus occupied, during which Simson was frequently sick and unable to attend; but before the Assembly met the evidence was brought to a close.

When at last the month of May 1727 arrived, and the Assembly met, the great case that was in dependence was the subject of every minister's and every elder's talk, as they paced the lobby of St Gile's Church. It was made the subject of the opening sermon; it exerted its influence upon the choice of the Moderator; it was expected to occupy the greater part of the Assembly's time. The principal

articles of the libel were that Professor Simson had denied the necessary existence of the Son; that he had said the necessary existence and independence of the Son were things we know not; that he had affirmed these things were philosophical niceties; that he had taught that the Trinity was not numerically one. Before the Court proceeded to consider the relevancy of these articles, the Professor protested that he held no opinions contrary to the Confession of Faith; that if necessary existence and independency on the part of the Son were to be held relevant, they must be inserted in the Standards of the Church; that he had gathered his notions of the Trinity principally from the writings of Dr Owen; that he was afraid some of his brethren were tending towards Sabellianism, making the Three Persons but modes or relations, which was more to be dreaded than Arianism; that when he delivered the discourse referred to in the libel, he was very unwell, under opiates prescribed by his physicians; and that if he used such expressions as were attributed to him, he now retracted them. He concluded by saying that he was now sixty years of age, and had not long to live, and that in all his teaching he had had nothing in view but the glory of God.*

The Assembly first considered whether his denial of Christ's necessary existence was relevant to infer censure. Among those who addressed the House for the affirmative was Mr M'Laurin of Glasgow, the author of the celebrated sermon, "Glorying in the Cross of Christ," which, for richness of thought and vigour of argument, is surpassed by few productions of the Scottish pulpit. He insisted that all the Persons were equal as to Their perfections, though not as to Their order; that necessary existence, though not directly attributed to Christ in Scripture, was to be inferred from His being called Jehovah and God, and therefore ought to be taught in a course of divinity. Mr Dundas of Arniston answered him, and, while acknowledging his belief in the necessary existence of Christ, attempted to show by a legal argument that the article was not relevant. The second

* We have here given the substance of two separate addresses given by Simson before the Assembly.

article, in regard to the independence of Christ, excited still keener debates, and in fact called up difficulties which the Assembly was unable to resolve. It was stated that Dr Owen taught that the Son was dependent as to His nature and creation on the Father; and that neither the Westminster Confession, nor any other Protestant Confession, determined whether the Son, as to His personality, was dependent or not. It was therefore suggested that, in these circumstances, "as to His Deity" should be inserted in the libel, and with this alteration the article was held relevant.

The evidence upon these two articles was next considered. The most of the ministers who spoke in regard to the first article held it to be proven. But the late Advocate, Dundas, again exerted his great legal learning on behalf of Simson. He argued upon the length of time which had elapsed since the debateable words were spoken; upon the fact of special dates not being condescended upon; upon the youth of one of the witnesses; his having, on oath, ascribed false Latin to the Professor, and contradicted himself; upon the circumstance of another witness having sworn only to the best of his remembrance; upon *verba emissa;* and concluded, that in such a case proof was scarcely possible, except by written documents, especially if there were contrary assertions and renunciations at the bar. When the vote, however, was taken, it was carried "proven" by a large majority. The other article was unanimously found not proven. It could not be otherwise, as the libel had been altered after the evidence had been led. Wodrow says it was lost of design, that the Church might not determine the controversy about the independency or dependency of Christ's personality, regarding which orthodox divines differed.

The Assembly, wearied, but not worn out by many days' debate, now proceeded to the consideration of some of the other articles of the libel. The relevancy of his denial of the numerical oneness of the Trinity was most keenly contested. Principal Chalmers, of King's College, Aberdeen, contended that the article was not relevant; that it was only a question whether the term *numerical oneness* should be used in teaching; and that no such phrase was sanctioned

by the Confession of Faith, or any other authoritative symbol. It was argued, on the other hand, that there was involved in his denial of the numerical oneness a doctrine which was undoubtedly taught in the Standards of the Church, though not expressed in these very words; and that it was evident he rejected the phrase, because he ascribed a necessary existence and independence to the Father, which he denied to the Son. For five hours was the debate kept up on this point, but finally the article was found both relevant and proven. At this stage in the procedure the heretical Professor appeared at the bar, and read a paper containing his sentiments upon the articles found proven against him, in which he expressed himself in such an orthodox manner that people remarked he was like Charles I.—he made many concessions, but they always came too late.

So much time had now been spent, and so much yet remained to be done, that it became evident the trial could not be brought to a conclusion before the rising of the Assembly. It was therefore resolved to remit the matter to the presbytery and committee to proceed still further in the case, and ripen it for the decision of the next Assembly; and in the meantime to suspend Professor Simson from his functions, in consequence of what had already been proven. So the matter ended for a season; but the whole Church had been intensely excited, and awaited the final issue with breathless suspense.

The presbytery, assisted by the Assembly's committee, again set to work. They considered the articles in the libel which the Assembly had not been able to overtake, and pronounced them, with one or two exceptions, to be relevant and proven. They did more—they broke new ground. They commenced a fresh libel, charging the speculative Professor with violating the Act of 1717, and using expressions capable of an Arminian signification. They summoned fifteen witnesses to prove it. With two libels hanging over his head, how could the unhappy man hope to escape?

A.D. 1728. Again the month of May came round, and again the Assembly met. The excitement was now, if possible, greater than before, for it was known a

decision must be given. George II. was now upon the throne, and the Earl of Loudoun appeared as his representative. The sermon preached at the opening of the Assembly, and the sermons preached upon the Sabbath before the Lord High Commissioner, were full of the great subject which occupied everybody's thoughts. When the case was taken up, there was a protest lodged on behalf of the University of Glasgow, to the effect that no determination of the Assembly should affect their rights to judge their own members. After some discussion, the protest was received, but the Assembly resolved to proceed with its work. Mr Simson now appeared at the bar, and gave in a paper, in which he strongly declared his adherence to the Westminster Confession, and his belief in the necessary existence of the Son, and declared that he knew not language in which he could assert the doctrine more plainly than he did; but that, if any member of the House would state his scruples, he would remove them.

The article of the libel upon which the Assembly first entered charged the Professor with saying that necessary existence and independence were terms impertinent, and not to be used in speaking of the Trinity. Professor Hamilton of Edinburgh gave it as his opinion that the words were proven, but argued that they might be detached words; that the proposition, "It was lawful to kill in self-defence," was entirely altered if the two last words were omitted; and, moreover, reminded the Assembly that it had itself shunned coming to a conclusion upon Christ's independence. It was agreed, however, that the article, after dropping from it independence, was proven. The next article, which charged the Professor with saying that these things were philosophical niceties, was dropped.

Simson was now allowed to make an exculpatory defence in regard to his alleged denial of the Three Persons being numerically One in substance. The finest metaphysical distinctions used by Aristotle and the Schoolmen were employed on both sides. There were discourses upon the terms homoousian, hypostasis, substance, essence. It was urged on the one hand, both at the bar and in the House,

that Professor Simson had denied numerical oneness only in Aristotle's sense of the phrase; that Dr Stillingfleet had used similar language; that the Socinians, whose doctrines were to be avoided, insisted greatly upon numerical oneness; that there was a controversy in the days of Athanasius about the "one hypostasis" and the "three hypostases," and yet that both parties were regarded by Athanasius himself as orthodox; and finally, that Simson used every term that was used by the Confession of Faith. It was maintained, on the other side, that Simson's fault lay in applying Aristotle's sense of *numerical* to the Deity, and in applying his definition of *person* to personal unity; that his deviation from sound doctrine was to be inferred from the distinction which he made between the Divine substance and the Divine essence; and, in fine, it was asked, in the words of Cromwell at the trial of Archbishop Laud, "If the archbishop thinks as we do, why does he not speak as we do?" The Assembly finally agreed that there was no exculpation in what had been pled, but some ground for alleviation, the consideration of which they reserved till they should come to their censure.

This done, the Assembly proceeded to consider Simson's refusal to give distinct answers to the Presbytery's interrogatories; and, by an overture, the whole question of the propriety of putting queries to persons who were suspected of heresy, with censure annexed to refusal, was opened up. Some members argued, that if a course so inquisitorial was sanctioned, they might themselves be subjected to a process of questioning on account of what they had said in the course of the trial. Professor Hamilton, a man of a liberal and enlightened mind, maintained that if a man, upon any tittle-tattle, might be put to the question, and censured if he declined to reply, no one was safe. Encouragement would be given to pry too closely into our neighbours' thoughts, and every man would be made a spy upon his brother. Different presbyteries, moreover, might pronounce different sentiments to be erroneous, and a flame kindled that would consume the Church.

Lord Grange, one of the Senators of the College of Justice, who took a profound interest in ecclesiastical affairs,

and of whom we shall hear more anon, spoke for an hour on the opposite side. He argued that there was nothing in law or liberty against putting queries in cases of suspicion, "unless," said he, "we are to have a new law, as we are like to have a new gospel, palmed upon us." According to the Form of Process, judicatories were authorized to inquire into the grounds of any *fama* that might arise; and *fama clamosa* was not mere tittle-tattle—the talk of the mob; it was defined by lawyers to be what grave and discreet men believed, and was by the best lawyers made a ground of civil processes, as might be seen in Matheus' "De Criminibus," and "Danhonderus." Every one who had spoken, he remarked, had owned the necessity of putting questions on overt acts, and just suspicion raised by these, so he reckoned the main thing given up; but further than this, he maintained there was nothing contrary to law, or liberty, or the Revolution settlement, in taking up a man on just suspicion and examining him. Among the Romans such a practice had been used; in all places where the canon law was followed it was used; in Holland, where liberty was high, it was used; in Britain it was secured to the Church of Scotland by law, though it might be called by their neighbours the Presbyterian Inquisition; in England it was allowed, where a Secretary of State might take up a man from the streets, examine him, and imprison him if he refused to answer. The Church, he argued, had as good a right to question on suspicion as the civil magistrate, if not greater. The magistrate had power only over men's bodies and estates, and not over their opinions, so long as these were buried in their breasts; and therefore the process *Super Inquirendis* was declared to be a grievance in the Claim of Right. But the Church had a law of faith, and a right to inquire into the opinions of all its members; and in vain had the Church any power to inquire, if it had no power to censure the obstinate.

Mr Dundas of Arniston rose to reply. He said he would not limit supreme judicatories in extraordinary cases, but he thought it would be very hazardous to give such a power to inferior courts—a power which might lead to a tyranny worse than was exercised by the Inquisition, for even it was restricted

by rules. In England it might be the practice of the Secretary of State to do such things as were pretended, but he doubted if there was any law which sanctioned it. In Holland, notwithstanding the boast of liberty, there was still trial by torture. He could not believe that the Church of Scotland was warranted by law to pry into people's breasts upon mere suspicion. If a man had his doubts, as almost every man who reasoned had, it were hard to wring these out of him by interrogatories; and while the Church had a clear right to be satisfied of every man's faith before she received him as a minister, or even as a member, after he was received he ought not to be quarrelled, unless upon some overt act.

From the way in which the vote was ultimately taken, the Church did not give a direct decision upon the fine point which had been raised; but the resolution come to was thought to imply "a dropping" of the method of queries in processes of error, with a censure annexed.*

It still remained for the Assembly to see what heterodoxy could be extracted from the papers given in by the Professor. He had spoken of the matter and *modus* of the oneness of God; and this he explained by distinguishing between the *matter* of the Divine perfections, and the *modus* of the personal relations. But the debate ran principally upon the necessary existence of the First Cause, as used in the Deistical controversy, and how far this was applicable only to the Father "being of none," and how far to the Son, as it was alleged that Mr Simson had made it personal to the Father. Pictet, Damasus, Clarke, Jackson, and Waterland were brought to bear upon the subject. Mr Goldie, afterwards well known as one of the leading men of the Church, stood forth as the champion of the accused, and adduced passages from Athanasius and Eusebius, from Potavius and Sandius, from Bishop Bull and Bishop Pearson, in which self-existence, or αγεννητος, was taken for the personal property of the Father. The term at best, he urged, was ambiguous, and therefore it were hard to make its use a subject of censure. Mr Hamilton of Glasgow, and Principal Haddow of St

* Wodrow's Correspondence, vol. iii.

Andrews, on the other hand, maintained that words used at first in a good sense by the Fathers, were subsequently used in a bad sense; that at the Reformation these ambiguities were laid aside, and Christ acknowledged as very God, but that such Arminian writers as Curcelleus, Episcopius, and Vorstius, had reintroduced them, and infected many of the English divines. They argued that in the Deistical controversy necessary existence behoved to be essential necessary existence, for Reason knew nothing of persons, and Revelation was no argument with Deists; whereas Mr Simson had made it personal to the Father.

This lengthened trial was now drawing to a close. The consideration of the proof was finished, and the pleadings began. Mr Simson's counsel pled that there were twenty-seven witnesses to establish his soundness, and only three to gainsay it. They brought a proof from Reinerus, who was Inquisitor-General, upon the prosecution of heretics, that heretics who had heresy proven against them by the oaths of witnesses might purge themselves by an oath on the Gospels. They cited from history the case of Eusebius of Nicomedia, who had a renunciation offered him, and, refusing it, was condemned; and of Eusebius of Pamphila, who had joined the Arians, but who, upon his recantation, was acquitted. As if in pursuance of this argument, a member of the Assembly was now permitted to ask Mr Simson whether he owned that the Son of God was begotten by nature, in opposition to fate and co-action? and whether he believed Christ had all the Divine perfections, and necessary existence in particular, as a person, as the Son, in the same way the Father had? To these questions the Professor gave in his answers in writing. He declared that it was his constant opinion that the Son, as Son and a person, was possessed of all perfections and necessary existence in the same way as the Father was, and that by His generation, which he believed to be by necessity of nature, and not by co-action and fate; and farther, that he believed the oneness of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost to be numerical. The erring Professor had now retracted everything, and declared his belief in language as orthodox as could possibly be found. His counsel accord-

ingly pled that, upon retraction, there could be no deprivation; that by the common law, heretics, when not obstinate, could not be condemned; and cited Corvinus in support of what they said.

But many members of the Assembly thought differently. They said they were to consider not merely what Professor Simson now declared to be his belief, but what had been proven against him. The minister of Kiltearn said, if the prophets and apostles were members of the Assembly, they would soon settle the matter, for Paul had said, "If any man preach another gospel, let him be accursed." He thought the higher excommunication should be pronounced against the unhappy heretic. The minister of Bothkennar quoted the verse—"If any man love not our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maran-atha." Another minister said that though Peter had not gone so far as to deny the necessary existence of Christ, he had yet wept bitterly for his sin, and there was no such sign of repentance on the part of Professor Simson. Lord Dunmore rebuked these unseemly fulminations, and remarked that a judge should not aggravate matters, but be as ready to have a culprit vindicated as to have him condemned.

Professor Simson was now no longer a heretic, but still it was the almost unanimous opinion of the Assembly that he had been a heretic. Moreover, this was the second time he had come before the General Assembly charged with heresy. What was to be done? A few would have wished him excommunicated. The great majority were divided between deposition and suspension. So strong was the feeling evoked, and so angry the threats of a breach in the Church, that the Assembly was again compelled to delay a final sentence in the case. It was resolved to continue his suspension till next Assembly, and in the meantime to have the process printed and sent down to presbyteries to have their opinions upon it. This resolution was founded upon a narrative, in which it was stated that the Professor had given in papers to the Assembly, in which he asserted the necessity of the existence and generation of the person of Christ, and that the title of *Summus Deus* and the Only True

God were equally applicable to the Father and the Son; that the Three Persons in the Godhead were one substance or essence in number; and that therefore his sentiments upon these articles were sound and orthodox; but that it had been proven to the Assembly that he had taught things inconsistent with these truths, and had neglected many opportunities of giving earlier satisfaction to the Church in regard to his opinions.

When the process was thus cast abroad upon the presbyteries, very many and different feelings were elicited. Some pitied Simson. They said that the points on which he was thought to have erred were of a very abstruse nature; that they were not alluded to in the Bible; that they were not determined by the Confession of Faith; that they were debated by orthodox divines; and, besides, that he had now retracted every ambiguous expression, and satisfied the most rigid as to his soundness in the faith. Others said they had no pity for him. He had virtually denied one of the fundamental articles of the Christian creed. His shuffling conduct before the Assembly had lowered him instead of raising him in their esteem. Every retractation had been wrung from him by fear; and there was reason to think he had done violence to his faith to preserve his office. Thus variously did men speak and think.

When the Assembly met in May 1729, it was found that only two or three presbyteries wished him continued in his office. But there was a considerable division of sentiment as to whether his suspension should be made perpetual, and so his salary secured to him, or whether he should at once be deposed, and so beggared. Simson again made profession of his faith; his counsel was again heard in his defence; and the whole field of controversy, so carefully trodden last year, was trodden again. Those who clamoured for deposition were told that such a sentence would throw a reproach upon the preceding Assembly; and they were challenged to produce from history a single case of an ecclesiastical council proceeding to extremities against a man who had retracted his errors. After a protracted struggle, the Assembly agreed to a resolution which amounted to a sentence

of perpetual suspension. The Divinity Hall of Glasgow was thus delivered from a Professor whose prelections were considered to be dangerous; and the repentant heresiarch was saved from starvation.*

When the sentence was read, and the question put—Did the Assembly acquiesce in it? there was profound silence over the house for a minute or so; when Thomas Boston of Ettrick rose up and said—"I find myself under a necessity of declaring my dissent from the decision of the Assembly, as I think the censure inflicted by it is not adequate to the offence given. I cannot help thinking that the cause of Jesus Christ, as to the great and essential point of His Supreme Deity, has been at the bar of this Assembly requiring justice; and as I am shortly to answer at His bar for all I do or say, I dare not give my assent to the decision of this act: on the contrary, I feel myself obliged on this occasion to offer a protest against it; and therefore in my own name, and in the name of all who shall adhere to me, and if none will, for myself alone, I crave leave to enter my protest against the decision of the act."† By the urgent persuasion of the Moderator, however, the stern Athanasian was induced not to insist upon his protest being recorded; and so, after three years of controversy, the matter came to an end.

We have thus minutely traced this trial, because it is one of the most memorable in the annals of the Church. It involved high points of divinity; it excited intense interest; it brought men of great learning and ability on the field—Haddow, Hamilton, Campbell, Chalmers, Goldie, M'Laurin, Boston; and of the laity, Lord Grange and Lord Dunmore,

* I have been almost entirely indebted to Wodrow's Correspondence for the lengthened account I have given of this trial. I could have no better authority. Wodrow was a member of the Assembly's committee appointed to correspond with the Presbytery of Glasgow in prosecuting the case. He was present at the three Assemblies before which the case was tried, and almost every night wrote home to his wife a most minute account of every motion that was made, and of every speech that was spoken. His letters, in fact, are so minute as to be both tedious and tiresome. For two years both his head and his heart were quite full of the matter; and a large proportion of the third volume of his Correspondence is occupied with it.

† Boston's Memoirs, Appendix.

Dundas of Arniston, and the Solicitor-General.* No churchman of that day towers tall above his compeers, and stands as the representative man of his age; but the debates show that there were at that period professors teaching in our universities, and ministers labouring in our parishes, possessed of vigorous intellect and extensive erudition. The archives of ancient councils were ransacked, and the pages of forgotten authors explored, for matter which might bear upon the subject in debate; and metaphysical points were discussed with a subtlety worthy of an oriental synod. It will probably be thought by many that some of the debaters on both sides, led by their metaphysical bent, entered upon paths unillumined by Revelation, and not marked out in the Standards of the Church. These were the ancestors and educators of the men who shortly afterwards arose in our country to found a school of metaphysics which is respected over the world.

We have frequently quoted the name of Lord Grange in the case of Professor Simson. He was a correspondent of Wodrow's, an elder of the Church, a member of many Assemblies, and was uniformly to be found among the strictest and most orthodox of the Presbyterians. Yet this man, listened to as an oracle, and almost revered as a saint, was a disguised Jacobite, and would retire from the judicatories of the Church to the secret conclaves of traitors, or the criminal dissipations of London life. Though his real character was never suspected by the simple-minded ministers with whom he took sweet counsel in the Assemblies, it was partly known to the watchful Sir Robert Walpole, then at the head of the government, and seems also to have been penetrated by some of the rabble; for on one occasion there was found attached to his door a paper, inquiring if he was not a Jesuit and a pensioner of the Pope. His domestic life contains a tragedy still more marvellous than anything in

* It is worthy of note, that the Principals of Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Aberdeen—Campbell, Hamilton, and Chalmers—favoured Simson. Principal Haddow of St Andrews was against him. Haddow was the chief opponent of the Marrow Men, and on that account has incurred with many the suspicion of heterodoxy; but his conduct in this case should be enough to redeem him. No doubt, zeal for orthodoxy was in reality his motive in both instances.

his public career. His wife was a termagant; and many, sorry for him, said it was a pity so good a man should have such a thorn in the flesh—such a messenger of Satan to buffet him. But in 1732 it was announced that his lady had died, and her funeral was duly attended, and the coffin consigned to the grave. It was not till ten years afterwards that the mystery was revealed. It was a mock burial. The lady, at the instance of her husband, had been seized in her own house by a band of Highlanders, hurried about from place to place, and at last consigned to one of the most lonely of the Hebrides. It was thought she had secrets which it was dreaded she might tell. Such a man was Lord Grange.*

One is greatly pleased to find that the Assemblies which were so greatly occupied with such high speculations in regard to the Trinity, were able to descend from their altitudes, and to turn their attention to the practical duties of Christianity. The Royal College of Physicians laid before them a memorial regarding the erection of an infirmary in Edinburgh for the reception of the diseased poor. In this document they stated, that having observed many miserable objects, some of them inhabitants of the city, some of them strangers from all corners of the kingdom, seeking for health and unable to find it, from their inability to procure medicines and medicalattendance, they had already established a dispensatory, where medicine was gratuitously dispensed, and where each of them in turn was in attendance to give advice. But their medicine and advice, they said, were too often unavailing, from the poor objects who sought their help having no proper lodgings to shelter them, no skilful nurse to wait upon them, no nourishing diet to strengthen them. The good physicians therefore proposed to erect an infirmary, into which the victims of disease or of accident should be received, and carefully maintained and ministered unto, till

* This strange story is admirably told by Mr Burton in his History (vol. ii.) The letters of Lord Grange, published in the Miscellany of the Spalding Club, have fully brought out his character. They form a strange contrast to his letters in Wodrow. Boswell, in his Tour to the Hebrides, relates the story of Lady Grange.

they were thoroughly cured. The pious and philanthropic project was at once warmly embraced by the servants of that blessed Master one of whose highest commendations on the great day of accounts is to be, "I was sick, and ye visited me." They ordered a collection to be made in all their churches for forwarding the good work.* Future Assemblies repeated the injunction. The Edinburgh Infirmary rose into being, and it has continued from that day to this, like the pool of Bethesda in the midst of Jerusalem, the resort of "a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water."

At this period in our history we part company with Robert Wodrow; and in shaking hands with him, and saying adieu, we feel as if parting from an old and trusty friend, with whom we have travelled over many a mile, and enjoyed many a pleasant talk. He was born at Glasgow in 1679. His father was Professor of Divinity in the University, and while Robert was yet pursuing his academical course he was made librarian to the College, and to this may probably be traced his life-long devotion to reading and books. Soon after the close of his theological curriculum he was chosen minister of Eastwood, in the neighbourhood of Glasgow, then a quiet rural parish, but now containing the populous suburban burgh of Pollockshaws. After seven years of research and toil, he published, in 1721 and 1722, his celebrated "History of the Sufferings of the Church of Scotland," embracing the period from the Restoration to the Revolution. It has none of the graces of composition, it is sadly deficient in that methodical arrangement which is so essential to history, but it contains a most valuable collection of facts, fortified by documents which cannot be gainsaid. Soon after its publication it was attacked by violent Cameronians and violent Episcopalians, but very few of its statements were invalidated, and Bishop Burnet's "History of His Own Times," which appeared a few years afterwards, confirmed its veracity in every essential particular. Few general readers would now wade through its lumbering sentences and confused mass of

* Acts of Assembly, pp. 601, 602.

matter, but every student of the time will respectfully consult it as an authority of the highest value.

The "History of the Sufferings of the Church" is not Wodrow's only work. His "Analecta" is now known to the literary world. He was a careful collector of "particular providences," fond of gathering up ancient reminiscences of ecclesiastical worthies; and in that work we have of these full store. His "Correspondence," recently published by the society which bears his name, is more valuable still, and lets much light in upon the period over which it extends—from 1709 to 1731. He took a deep interest in ecclesiastical affairs, and in the confidence of private intercourse he freely discusses the topics which then agitated the Church. He was a devout attender upon the Assemblies. Every May he mounted his horse and hied him to Edinburgh, whether he was commissioned by his presbytery or not; and in his letters from the Assembly to his wife, written with all the more care that they were to be seen by the aged Lord Pollock, one of the confessors of the Church in persecuting times, and now no longer able to sit in her courts, he gives an account of what was said and done, which, though utterly destitute of graphic power, and without even vivacity, has yet the freshness and the trueness to life which arise from his describing what he himself had heard and seen.

It is impossible to read his "Correspondence" without pronouncing him to be a good and worthy man. He had not the vigour of mind to shake off the narrow notions which still lingered in the Church, and to rise superior to his age; he was imbued with the feelings, the prejudices, and superstitions of his day; he believed in witches, reprobated Prelacy, hankered after the Solemn League and Covenant; but these things did not seriously sully his piety or virtue. He died in 1734, in the fifty-fifth year of his age, and lies buried in the churchyard of Eastwood, where he so faithfully laboured, and was so greatly beloved.

A few years before this, Walter Stewart of Pardovan, whose learned "Collections concerning the Worship, Discipline, and Government of the Church" are still held of high authority, was laid in the dust; and among Wodrow's letters

there is one to his wife about the erection of a tombstone over his grave. In the churchyard of Eastwood this tombstone is still to be seen, and not far away from it is a more modern and more ornate one, erected in honour of Wodrow himself.

But we must now go back several years, and trace the history of patronage from its restoration in 1712, as its presence was now beginning to be felt in the Church. In the sixteenth century, the battle of Protestantism and Popery was fought and won; in the seventeenth century, the struggle lay between Presbytery and Prelacy; in the eighteenth century, patronage and popular rights came into collision, and the contest has been obstinately maintained till the present day.

For nearly twenty years the act restoring patronage remained almost a dead letter in the statute-book. It was very seldom acted upon. The current of feeling in the Church and the country was strongly against it, and the patrons seem to have had little wish to exercise a power which would have made them so obnoxious to both presbyteries and people. Moreover, it was still more easy to find parishes for ministers than ministers for parishes. With the connivance, if not the positive approbation, of the patrons, settlements were generally made upon a call from the people, under the supervision of the presbytery of the bounds.* The few cases in which presentations were issued and accepted under the act, showed how difficult it was to carry out a law in the face of strong public opinion. A Mr Duguid received a presentation to Burntisland, and laid it upon the table of the Presbytery of Kirkcaldy. He had been bred as a Papist; and though now a Protestant, he was the tool of the Prelatists. When his case was brought before the Commission of the Assembly, he ventured to be insolent, and that once omnipotent court, not yet sufficiently humbled to be thus treated with impunity, stripped him of his license. He afterwards took Episcopal orders, and became an active enemy of the Church.†

* In some cases the patron recommended a person for the vacant parish. There are several instances of this in the presbytery record of Perth.

† Wodrow's Correspondence, vol. iii. p. 459.

But many of the patrons were Jacobites, bitter enemies of the Presbyterian Church, and some of them took advantage of the Patronage Act to keep their parishes vacant. Within the six months allowed them by law, they presented a man, who, they had reason to know, would not accept of it, and in this way gained six months more; and, by a series of such fictitious presentations, well timed, so as to prevent the *jus devolutum* taking place, they could keep the benefice in their hands as long as they pleased. In the spring of 1717 a deputation from the Church proceeded to London, to lay before the government of George I. the grievances under which they groaned.* Among other things they mentioned the abuse of patronage, and a remedy was promised. Accordingly, in 1719, in the act passed for altering the Abjuration Oath, which had been a source of such contention for many years, there was a clause inserted to the effect, that unless the presentee accepted the presentation, the six months allowed by law to the patron were not to be regarded as interrupted, and at their close the power was to pass to the presbytery.

* The Diary of the Rev. William Mitchell, one of the members of this deputation, is now printed in the Miscellany of the Spalding Club, vol. i., and it gives us an interesting peep at the state of parties. The deputation was instructed to endeavour to obtain the removal of the Patronage Act, and some hard clauses in the Toleration Act, and also some change in the Abjuration Oath. They were most eager about patronage, but they soon saw that its abolition was hopeless. Dining one day with the Earl of Roxburgh—the Marquis of Montrose, Lord Rothes, and Jerviswood being present—they were told by these noblemen that they, "for their own part, could be easy in quitting their patronages, but were apprehensive others would not go into it, being now a law, and that many would think that it was giving the Church too much power, which she had not well used in setting elders against their masters" (p. 228). Dining afterwards with Lord Rothes, those present said "that a repeal of the Patronage Act was not to be expected; asked what we would put in the place of it; and offered to remedy some things in the execution of it, with respect to keeping churches long vacant, and disaffected patrons" (p. 232). As the time for the meeting of the Assembly approached, the Scotch nobles in London were very solicitous that the ministers should return to Scotland to be present at it, promising that they would attend to their business; but the ministers were very reluctant to go. However, at an interview they had with the king, his Majesty told them that "he had a just regard for the Church of Scotland, and would take care of her concerns, and that he judged it proper for them to go to the Assembly." Thus bowed out of London by royalty, the deputation could no longer remain, and

It was thought that this clause might be in the hands of the Church a two-edged sword, and cut two ways. It was thought that if stretched to the uttermost it might ease the Church not merely of sham presentations, but of patronage altogether. Could not the Church forbid its ministers and probationers, under the highest spiritual penalties, to accept of presentations? Could it not strip them of their license, depose them, excommunicate them, if they were guilty of any such sinful compliances? Such extremities were certainly talked of, not only in private, but in the Courts of the Church; and Willison declares in his "Testimony," "that there was no man that presumed to take, accept, or make use of a presentation for several years after this act was passed;"* and when men did begin to accept of unconditional presentations, it is certain that more than one licentiate was degraded for having "had the assurance" to do so.† Some have thought

set out for the north, with large promises; but nothing definite done. There is a curious anecdote told in the Diary, worth repeating. At an interview which the deputation had with the Prince and Princess of Wales, the Princess, wishing to be polite, said, "Gentlemen, I am sorry your Church has grievances; I hope they do not hurt you much; but I beg your pardon, I should have said your *Kirk*."

* Willison's Testimony, p. 48. In a petition presented to the General Assembly in 1732, the following passage occurs:—"It being evident, from the printed index of the Acts of Assembly 1724, that it was referred to the Commission to consider what is proper to be done as to ministers or probationers who show a willingness to accept of presentations from patrons, and to propose an overture hereupon to the next Assembly; and nothing have been yet done herein, though that grievance not only continues but increases; and the good effect of the amendment made in the Patronage Act, Anno 1719, is like to be totally defeated by ministers and probationers thus accepting presentations (contrary to our known principles) without calls from vacant congregations, yea, long before any meetings were appointed for choosing and calling pastors; and some judicatories, who have testified their just displeasure against presentees for their said unworthy and offensive practice, instead of being supported (as might have been expected), were condemned by the Commission: It is therefore earnestly desired that the General Assembly may seasonably interpose in the way they shall judge most proper, to give an effectual check to such dangerous practices of ministers and probationers of this Church, and *that none be licensed or ordained who favour this course.*" See Struthers's History, vol. i. p. 603.

† Dr Robert Burns of Paisley, in his examination before the Patronage Committee of the House of Commons, said, "They (the Church) saw that by this act the acceptance of presentations within six months was necessary to its being sustained, and they prohibited licentiates from taking presentations." In the year 1725, I find Mr George Blaikie deprived of his license for taking

that had the Church vigorously followed up this system, putting forth her spiritual powers to paralyze unpopular presentees, patronage itself would soon have sunk into decrepitude. But this is more than doubtful. In an order of men so numerous as the clerical, there must always have been diversities of character and opinion, so that patrons would have no difficulty in finding needy probationers ready to accept a living at all hazards; and the Church Courts would

a presentation." Dr Burns said that he made this statement on the authority of the records of the Presbytery of Haddington. If he be correct in this, Blaikie must have been restored, and that only to give fresh trouble to the Church, as the following extract from the minutes of the Presbytery of Auchterarder shows:—"Ochterardour, Dec. 7, 1736.—Compears Patrick Murray of Dullary, and John Richardson, writer in Perth, and produced before the presbyterie a commission by the Viscount of Dupplin, patron of the paroch and paroch church of Madderty, direct to the said Patrick Murray, Alexander Jackson, writer in Perth, and the said John Richardson, of the date the 31st October last, empowering them, or either of them, to prosecute a presentation, granted by his Lordship to Mr George Blaikie, preacher of the gospel, before this presbyterie or other judicatories of this Church; as also produced a presentation by the said Viscount of Dupplin in favour of the said Mr Blaikie, presenting him to be minister of the said paroch and paroch church of Madderty, which is dated the 23d of September last, containing Mr Blaikie's acceptance on the foot of it, of the date the 27th of November last. . . . Thereafter the said Patrick Murray of Dullary and John Richardson produced a missive from Patrick Campbell of Monzie, one of the Senators of the College of Justice, and an heritor of the paroch of Madderty, addressed to the Rev. the Moderator of the Presbytery, signifying his concurrence in recommending Mr Blaikie to the presbytery to be settled minister of said paroch, dated 3d Dec. instant; and another missive, direct by James Moray of Abercairney, Esq., &c. (Here follow missives of concurrence from Lady Woodend and Dr Murray of Ardbenny.)

"The presbytery having removed the said Patrick Murray and John Richardson, and considering the above presentation, acceptance, and demand, *judge that the said presentation and acceptance can lay no foundation even in law for Mr Blaikie's settlement at Madderty*, if proper evidences are not produced in due time before them of his qualifications according to law and Acts of Assembly; always reserving to themselves full power to judge anent the settlement of Madderty, according to the rules and practice of this Church; and further agree, that all others having interest in that paroch be apprized of what is this day laid before the presbytery, and therefore appoint Mr John Drummond to write the heritors of the paroch of Madderty in this affair betwixt and next presbytery, *and to lay Mr Blaikie's conduct before the very Rev. the Presbytery of Perth, that they may take to consideration the irregular steps he has taken, and his direct crossing the rules of this Church with respect to the settling of vacancies.*"

Wodrow mentions the case of a presentee to Foulis, who was stripped of his license for the same crime by the same Presbytery of Auchterarder, which thus early began to acquire its anti-patronage celebrity.

probably have been soon checked by the law courts had they attempted to punish even by spiritual censures men whose only crime was obedience to the law.

From the year 1649 it was customary for the congregation to show their approbation of the person selected by the session, by giving him a formal call to be their minister. Even after the restoration of patronage, this call was regarded as more essential to a settlement than a presentation. Between 1712 and 1730, there were many settlements without presentations; no case is known of a settlement without a call. In 1724 the Crown presented to Lochmaben, but the people were not satisfied with the presentee; and when two competing calls came up before the Assembly, it was thought most judicious to set both aside, and to this the Lord Advocate gave his consent. In 1726 a presentation to Twynholm was disregarded, and the man who had the voice of the people inducted in preference to the man who had the presentation of the patron. About the same time a case occurred in Aberdeen, which shows still more strikingly the sentiments then prevalent in the Church. The town-council and a minority of the elders gave a call to a Mr Chalmers to be their minister; the majority of the session gave a call to a Mr Ogilvie. At the bar both ministers and lawyers flatly contradicted each other as to what were the wishes of the people. In the debate which ensued, Lord Grange reasoned at great length against the settlement of ministers upon a call merely from heritors and elders, or, in the case of burghs, from magistrates and elders. He said this was not ecclesiastical law; that to find ecclesiastical law they must go back to the Act of Assembly 1649, which was founded upon the "Second Book of Discipline." The Lord Advocate, in reply, condemned the Act 1649, and urged that the Act 1690 was the use and practice of the Church. "That act," said he, "is ratified by the Union, with our other customs." Lord Cullen also gave it as his opinion, that the Act of 1690 *as to calling* was not rescinded; that the directions it contained as to heritors, magistrates, and elders stood firm, though the right to give the stipend now lay with the patrons. It was finally agreed that a new

call should be moderated, so that the inclinations of the heads of families might be seen.*

When the new call was moderated, a hundred and thirty-nine heads of families voted for Chalmers; three hundred and seven against him. But it appeared that the majority of the communicants, besides the magistrates and elders, were in his favour; and therefore the Commission of Assembly sustained his call, and proceeded to his settlement. It was a new point—a call from the magistrates, session, and communicants, in opposition to a call from the majority of families—and it was carried up to the Assembly of 1726. After some keen discussion, the Assembly "disapproved of the Commission's proceedings, in the settlement of Mr Chalmers at Aberdeen, upon these grounds, that they had acted disagreeably to the instructions of last Assembly, particularly in not making due inquiry, and not having had due regard to the inclinations of the people." Some of the more violent members of the court wished the induction made null; but the Assembly, though it had disapproved of its Commission's proceedings, refused to quash what it had done.†

Though there was not a single voice at this period raised on behalf of unrestricted patronage, two parties were already beginning to range themselves in hostile ranks, and to fight their battles in the Courts of the Church. The one party contended that the call should be signed only by the heritors and elders; the other maintained that it should proceed from the whole heads of families belonging to the congregation. The former made the Act of 1690 their rallying cry;

* Wodrow's Correspondence, vol. iii. pp. 197–99. The highest legal authorities of that day seem never to have doubted the *legality* of the call—that it formed, in short, a necessary step toward the induction of a minister. This opinion seems to have been founded on the idea that the Act 1690 was not repealed by the Act 1712. So able a lawyer and so accurate a historian as Mr Hill Burton holds the same opinion in our own day. "But what seems chiefly to be overlooked," says he, "in this measure (the Patronage Act of 1712) is, that it left untouched the real popular element, whether of call or veto. Whatever privilege of this kind, by the law of the Church, the congregation possessed by the Act 1691 (1690?), was left uninjured by the Act of 1711 (1712?)." (History of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 55.)

† Wodrow Correspondence, vol. iii.

the latter the Act of 1649. The former were the Moderates of their day; the latter were the popular party, and went so far as to maintain the divine right of popular election.

When the Church was thus split into factions, the Church Courts were by no means uniform in their decisions. In presbyteries and synods, sometimes the one party had the majority, sometimes the other; and their sentences were dictated by their partisan opinions. But the superior courts not unfrequently reversed the decisions of the inferior courts. Thus, it sometimes happened that the General Assembly or its Commission ordered a presbytery to induct a man whom they had already resolved not to induct, on account of the opposition of the people. In such cases, it was not unusual for the ministers to allege scruples of conscience: they would not violate their convictions of duty; they would take no part in forcing a hireling upon the flock; they would obey God rather than man. What was to be done? Must the Assembly succumb to the presbytery? Must the law give way to individual scruples? To attempt to compel men in such a mood, and backed by popular feeling, to execute the sentences of the supreme court was hazardous; a schism would be the result. To yield to them was to allow an obstinate minority to concuss the majority into their measures.

In these difficult and delicate circumstances, the Assembly hit upon an expedient by which their sentences might be executed without any violation of the scruples of presbyteries. They appointed a committee of their own number, or perhaps of ministers belonging to the synod within the bounds of which the vacant parish lay, to execute their sentence by inducting the obnoxious presentee, allowing any member of the presbytery who chose to take part in the solemn act. These were soon stigmatized as "riding committees," because they were regarded as designed to override the objections of both presbyteries and people. The practice was certainly unconstitutional, and it was a pity that such an expedient was required; but still what else could be done? We must suppose that the Assembly came to its decisions quite as conscientiously as presbyteries; it could not be

expected to resile; and if, for the sake of peace, it did not peremptorily insist upon that subordination which is essential to the right government of every community, whether civil or ecclesiastical, it must employ the willing to do the work of the unwilling.

The Assembly had made several attempts to put an end to such disturbances by an act regulating calls, but all such attempts had hitherto been abortive. At length the attempt was destined to succeed; but success was purchased by a schism which has not yet been healed. In 1731 an overture was laid before the Assembly, to the effect that, in all cases where the planting of parishes devolved upon presbyteries, they should proceed upon a call from the heritors, being Protestants, and the elders. According to the provisions of the Barrier Act, this overture was transmitted to presbyteries for their opinion, with a notification that, if they should neglect to send up their opinions upon it, the overture would nevertheless be laid before the next General Assembly, to be passed into a standing act or not, as it should see cause.* This overture had an importance which at first sight does not appear, from the fact that as yet few patrons availed themselves of their right, and that the great majority of parishes were furnished with ministers under the direct supervision and control of the presbyteries.

When the Assembly met in 1732, and the returns of the presbyteries were examined, it was found that eighteen† presbyteries were in favour of the overture as it stood; that twelve were in favour of it with certain alterations; that thirty-one were against it; and that eighteen had made no return at all. What was to be done? The one party argued that, if the twelve were added to the eighteen, there were thirty presbyteries in favour of the overture; and as all presbyteries had been certified that their silence would be construed into consent, the eighteen which had made no return must be computed too, so that there were forty-eight against thirty-one. The other party, by a simpler and more

* Struthers's History of Scotland, vol. i. p. 597.

† Struthers says eighteen; M'Crie, the editor of the Wodrow Correspondence, and others say six.

legitimate arithmetic, maintained that there were only eighteen for the overture, and thirty-one against it; that the others could not be counted on either side; and that so the overture must be thrown out by the vote of the whole Church.

The fate of the overture was to decide whether the call was to be restricted to the heritors and elders, or whether it was to be extended to every head of a family; and therefore it brought into violent collision the two parties who divided the Church. Ebenezer Erskine, already distinguished among the Marrow Men, took a conspicuous part in the debate. "What difference," he exclaimed, "does a piece of land make between man and man in the affairs of Christ's kingdom, which is not of this world? Are we not commanded in the Word to do nothing by partiality? whereas here is the most manifest partiality in the world. We must have 'the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ,' or the privilege of His Church, 'without respect of persons;' whereas by this act we show respect to the man with the gold ring and the gay clothing, beyond the man with vile raiment and poor attire. I conceive, Moderator, that our managements and acts should run in the same channel with God's way, not diverging. We are told that 'God hath chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith.' It is not said that He hath chosen the heritors of this world, as we have done; but He 'hath chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom.' And if they be heirs of the kingdom, I wish to know by what warrant they are stripped of the privileges of the kingdom."* Notwithstanding this appeal, the overture was passed into an act.

It ordained that when a parish was vacant, and the patron delayed or declined to present, the heritors and elders in landward parishes, and the town-council and elders in burghal parishes, should, at a meeting of presbytery, and in the face of the congregation, give a call to some one to be their minister; that the person thus elected should then be proposed to the congregation, to be either approved of or disapproved of by them; and that, in case of disapproval,

* Thomson's History of the Secession Church, p. 37.

the presbytery should give judgment upon their reasons, and determine the matter. This rule was to be observed till it should please God in His providence to relieve the Church of the grievance of patronage.* This would now be regarded as a liberal measure; but not so then. It was in vain pled that it was a return to the Act of 1690, which had regulated the settlement of parishes previous to the imposition of patronage. This was not enough for men who believed that every man had a divine right, given him by Christ, the Head of his Church, to choose his own minister. The irritation spread over the country; arguments first used in the Assembly were afterwards repeated in the pulpit; and men who were heard with impatience by their brother ministers, were listened to with trembling attention by crowded congregations, who regarded them as oracles. Foremost amongst these was Ebenezer Erskine, about whom it is time we should know something.

Ebenezer Erskine was born at Dryburgh in 1680, and the pilgrim to the tomb of Sir Walter Scott, in wandering among the ruins of the venerable abbey, now stumbles upon a simple stone, recently erected, on which are engraven the names of Ralph and Ebenezer Erskine, two of a family of fifteen children, whom the proud house of Mar is not now ashamed to acknowledge as scions. In 1703 he was ordained minister of Portmoak, a quiet rural parish in Kinross-shire, stretching along the beautiful margin of Lochleven, and guarded on the north by the lofty Lomonds, which rise like two huge pyramids from the plain. Here he lived and laboured for twenty-eight long years. In every question which agitated the public mind, he was on the popular side. He was a Nonjuror, he was a Marrow Man, he was an anti-patronage man. His talents were above mediocrity, and when preaching he had a grave, impressive manner, which gave weight to his sermons, which were always simple and always scriptural. The sacramental gatherings begun by the Remonstrants were then at their height, and a minister's popularity was tested by the numbers who congregated around his tent at a communion season. At Eastwood, where

* Acts of Assembly, pp. 620, 621.

Wodrow was minister, there were about three hundred of the parishioners communicants; but it was no uncommon thing for twelve hundred persons to take their place at the tables. Wodrow, like a good and wise man, lamented this, but declared himself powerless to prevent it.* At Portmoak the concourse was greater still. Wine was generally ordered for two thousand communicants.† In 1731 Erskine was translated from Portmoak to Stirling, where he had a wider field of ministerial usefulness. Thus far have we traced his history—the simple history of a country minister—and so far well; but perhaps before his course is run we shall be inclined to think that his notions were narrow, and that, when the Church was beginning to shake herself free from the bigotry and intolerance of the preceding century, Ebenezer Erskine tenaciously clung to them, and was behind his age rather than before it.

The "Act anent the Planting of Churches" was passed, and the Assembly dissolved. But the battle, instead of being ended, was but begun. Full of the subject, and nettled by defeat, Ebenezer Erskine, on the very first Sabbath after he reached home, mounted his pulpit and preached a declamatory sermon, in which he asserted the divine right of the people to elect their pastors, and declared "that those professed Presbyterians who thrust men upon congregations, without the free choice their great King had allowed them, were guilty of an attempt to jostle Christ out of His government, and to take it on their own shoulders." Not satisfied with preaching this sermon, the apostle of popular rights immediately published it, and in the preface applied his sentiments to the obnoxious Act of Assembly.‡

* "We have many irregularities," says he, in one of his letters, "at the celebration of that holy ordinance, that cannot be yet rectified—at least not soon, especially here. I lie in the neighbourhood of the city of Glasgow, and we have confluences and multitudes. Perhaps I may have about three hundred of my own charge who are allowed to partake; and yet we will have a thousand, sometimes eleven or twelve hundred, at our tables. I am obliged to preach in the fields a Sabbath, or more sometimes, before our sacrament, and a Sabbath after it. We must bear what we cannot help." (Correspondence, vol. iii. p. 452.)

† Thomson's History of the Secession Church.

‡ Sir Henry Moncreiff's Life of Dr Erskine, Appendix.

But it was not long till he had a more prominent place to utter his opinions. In the preceding spring he had been chosen Moderator of the Synod of Perth and Stirling, and, according to custom, required to preach at the opening of the autumn meeting in Perth. In such circumstances he believed himself bound "to cry aloud and spare not." He gave out as his text, "The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner." "There is a two-fold call," said he, "necessary for a man's meddling as a builder in the Church of God; there is the call of God and of His Church. God's call consists in qualifying a man for His work; inspiring him with a holy zeal and desire to employ these qualifications for the glory of God and the good of His Church. The call of the Church lies in the free choice and election of the Christian people. The promise of conduct and counsel in the choice of men that are to build is not made to patrons, heritors, or any other set of men, but to the Church, the body of Christ, to whom apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers are given. As it is the natural privilege of every house or society of men to have the choice of their own servants or officers, so it is the privilege of the house of God in a particular manner. What a miserable bondage would it be reckoned for any family to have stewards or servants imposed on them by strangers, who might give the children a stone for bread, or a scorpion instead of a fish, poison instead of medicine? And shall we suppose that ever God granted a power to any set of men, patrons, heritors, or whatever they be—a power to impose servants on His family without His consent, they being the freest society in the world?" Warming with his subject as he approached the peroration, he exclaimed, "A cry is gone up to heaven against the builders by the Spouse of Christ, like that Cant. v. 7, 'The watchmen that went about the city found me; they smote me, they wounded me; the keepers of the walls took away my veil from me.' A cry and complaint came in before the bar of the last Assembly, for relief and redress of these and many other grievances, both from ministers and people. But instead of a due regard had

thereunto, an act is passed confining the power of election unto heritors and elders, whereby a new wound is given to the prerogative of Christ and the privileges of His subjects. I shall say the less of this act now that I had opportunity to exoner myself with relation to it before the National Assembly where it was passed. Only allow me to say, that whatever Church authority may be in that act, yet it wants the authority of the Son of God. All ecclesiastical authority under heaven is derived from Him; and, therefore, any act that wants His authority has no authority at all. And seeing the reverend synod has put me in this place, where I am in Christ's stead, I must be allowed to say of this act what I apprehend Christ himself would say of it, were He personally present where I am; and that is, that by this act the corner-stone is receded from; He is rejected in His poor members, and the rich of the world put in their room. If Christ was personally present, where I am by the synod's appointment in His stead, He would say in reference to that act, 'Inasmuch as ye have done it to one of the least of these little ones, ye did it to me.'" *

This was certainly strong language, and must have fallen offensively on many unwilling ears. Was Mr Erskine justified in speaking as he spoke in the place where he stood? Some thought then, and some think still, that he was. It was the custom of the time to discuss such topics in the pulpit. Knox did it, Melville did it, Henderson did it, Erskine's compeers did it. Others have held that it was, to say the least of it, indecent to take advantage of the position to which his brethren had voluntarily raised him to speak sentiments so obnoxious to them, and in a place where there was no room for a reply. If he wished to disburden his conscience, he had an opportunity of repeating the arguments he had used on the floor of the Assembly on the floor of the synod, and then he would have found men ready to face him. Others went farther, and held that he had sinned against the Church of which he was a minister, by using such condemnatory language in regard to its laws.

So thought the minister of Logierait, who, at the after-

* Thomson's History, pp. 47–49.

noon meeting of the synod, rose up and said that Mr Erskine in his sermon had spoken some things which had given offence to the brethren, and moved for inquiry. He was immediately seconded, and the matter was intrusted to a committee, to prepare it for the consideration of the court. Next day this committee laid upon the synod's table some of the passages in the sermon which they considered as disrespectful to the Church. For three days the subject was warmly discussed; but at length, by a majority of six votes, the synod found its recent Moderator deserving of censure. Erskine appealed to the ensuing Assembly, and a number of ministers and elders showed their sympathy by dissenting from the judgment.*

* Notwithstanding this decision, the Synod of Perth and Stirling cherished very strong anti-patronage sentiments, as the following resolution, entered on its records shortly afterwards, strikingly shows:—"The Synod of Perth and Stirling, taking to their serious consideration that patronages, or the power of presenting to churches and to take the oversight of souls, is a manifest encroachment upon the rights and liberties of the Church of Christ, as depriving Christians of that interest which they ought to have in calling their own pastors, and what the judicatories of this Church have always complained of and struggled against: and further, considering that some probationers and others do accept of presentations even before the parochners have occasion to hear them, or show their inclination for them, and adhere to these presentations, notwithstanding of the aversion of the congregation: Therefore the synod, being deeply impressed with a sense of the many evils arising from the accepting of presentations, do hereby give warning to all ministers and preachers of the gospel within their bounds, of the evil and danger of such undue practices, and earnestly exhort and admonish them to abstain therefrom, as they would not be found guilty of having a sinful hand in continuing this heavy grievance upon their mother-Church, and engage this synod, and the presbyteries thereof, to take notice of their conduct thereanent, as they shall see cause: and further, synod appoints a copy hereof to be recorded in all the presbytery-books within this province, and that each presbytery shall, at their first meeting after the synod, read the same in the hearing of probationers, and likeways of students of divinity whom at any time they shall take upon trials, and ere they enter any upon trials they shall endeavour to understand their sentiments anent presentations, their being a grievance to this Church, and their resolutions to follow no practice contrary to this recommendation, and cause deliver to them a just extract hereof, that none may pretend ignorance." This minute is accordingly entered in the records of the Presbytery of Auchterarder, on the 9th of May 1733; and then follows this minute in regard to some students who were on their trials:—"The Moderator having, in terms of the above act, asked the said students their thoughts of patronages and presentations, and they declaring that they look upon patronages to be a grievance to this Church, and are resolved to follow no practice contrary to the above recommendation, the Presbytery," &c.

But we must now turn our attention to another little history, which helped to aggravate public discontent. A Mr Stark had been settled in the parish of Kinross, in opposition to the wishes of a majority both of the people and the presbytery. The result of this was, that the people flocked to other parishes to receive the sacrament, and the presbytery refused to enrol Mr Stark as a member of their court. The matter came up before the Assembly of 1732, and the presbytery was enjoined to put Stark's name upon their roll, and its members were prohibited from admitting his parishioners to Church privileges without his sanction. Still the presbytery refused to recognise the intruder as a brother, and still the neighbouring ministers admitted the parishioners of Kinross to the sacraments. Such was the state of matters when the month of May 1733 came round.

When the Assembly met, the Marquis of Lothian took his seat upon the throne, and John Goldie, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, was raised to the Moderator's chair. The cases of Stark and Erskine were looked forward to with keen interest. Stark came first. Sir John Bruce and other parishioners of Kinross presented a petition complaining that the sentence of last Assembly had not been obeyed, and that Mr Stark had not yet been admitted a member of the presbytery. The members of the Presbytery of Dunfermline—among whom was Ralph Erskine, the brother of Ebenezer—were accordingly summoned to the bar, and then ordered to retire, constitute themselves into a court, and enrol Mr Stark. It was reported that the majority were willing to do so.* But the Assembly, not satisfied with this, was of opinion that their mutinous spirit should not go unpunished. It framed an act, in which it set forth that their conduct had been utterly inconsistent with the subordination of the Church's judicatories, and with the vows of obedience they had taken at their ordination, and was worthy of the highest censure. It appointed them to be rebuked, commanded them to recognise Mr Stark as a minister of the gospel, forbade them to admit his parishioners to

* Struthers's History, vol. i. p. 624.

ordinances without his consent, and prohibited any protest or dissent on their part to be received.*

The General Assembly may have erred in intruding Stark upon the people of Kinross; but having done so, they had no course open to them but to insist that his name should be inscribed upon the roll of the presbytery. The refusal of the presbytery can be justified by no maxim known in the Presbyterian Church. If such insubordination were allowed, all authority would be at an end. Conscience could scarcely be pled by the recusants, as it too often is in such cases as this. They were not asked to ordain Stark as minister of Kinross; that was done already. They were not even asked to constitute him a member of the presbytery, for, by the laws of the Church, being minister of Kinross, he was already a member of the Presbytery of Dunfermline; they were simply required to add his name to the presbytery-roll, and to admit him to their meetings. Notwithstanding a positive injunction of the Assembly, they refused to do so. Such a refractory presbytery deserved a rebuke.

The policy of the remaining part of the sentence is more questionable. Three years before this the Assembly had enacted that dissents from the decisions of the Church's judicatories should not be inscribed in the records, but simply kept by the clerk of court *in retentis*—an enactment which had caused a good deal of grumbling at the time. The recusant presbyters of Dunfermline were to be denied the consolation of offering a dissent or protest in any shape. Their pent-up feelings were to be refused an outlet. Their reasons for doing as they had done—and every man thinks he has good reasons for his conduct—were to have no record. This made the sentence seem doubly severe. Every church-court which values its peace should give an unlimited liberty of dissenting and protesting. It will act as a safety-valve. It will quietly let off an immense deal of ill-nature, which might otherwise explode. When a man's indignation at the injustice he has received is written in the record, and the leaf turned over, it will do harm to no one. There is no safer place in which it could be deposited.

* Acts of Assembly, pp. 623, 624.

When Ralph Erskine and his associates were thus rebuked, Ebenezer Erskine was placed at the bar. It was very evident that the tide of authority was running strongly against him; but supported by his three friends—William Wilson, the minister of Perth; Alexander Moncrieff, the minister of Abernethy; and James Fisher, the minister of Aberdalgie—he read a paper in which he very clearly and forcibly argued his case. He maintained that he was bound to disburden his conscience by speaking what he conceived to be the truth; that it was unrighteous to gag the mouth of those whom God had ordered to lift up their voice like a trumpet; that no act of Assembly declared the act which had been condemned to be a part of the Church's standards, or made it unlawful for ministers to preach against it. To imagine all acts of Assembly, said he, to be standards of discipline, is to enslave our consciences to the humours or rash decisions of men. If this act be a term of ministerial communion, why not other acts? and so we shall have as many articles of communion as there are acts of Assembly.*

These were strong arguments, but the Assembly was not convinced by them that Erskine had done no wrong. They found that the language used by him in his synodical sermon "was offensive, and tended to disturb the peace and good order of the Church," and appointed him to be rebuked at the bar, and rebuked he was.† But though Erskine stood the rebuke, he did not relinquish the opinions for which he had already fought so hard a fight. He left upon the table of the Assembly a protest, in which he declared that he still adhered to his opinions, and would still declare them. His three faithful followers gave in their adherence to his protest, and then the four quietly left the Assembly. But the Assembly, instead of entering the document in their records, regarded it as a defiance of their authority, and summoned the protesters again into their presence. A committee was

* The paper read by Erskine at the bar of the Assembly is given at length in Struthers's History, vol. i.

† Acts of Assembly, p. 624. In the minute of Assembly, it is said that Ebenezer Erskine was rebuked. In the First Testimony it is said that Ebenezer Erskine declared from the bar that he would not submit to a rebuke, and at once gave in his protest. (See p. 21.) What are we to believe?

appointed to confer with them; but they resolutely refused to withdraw their protest, or unsay a single word they had said. The Assembly hesitated to go farther without giving them time for consideration, and therefore remitted the case to the Commission, empowering it, at its meeting in August, to suspend them from the exercise of their ministry if they did not then retract their protest, and express sorrow for their conduct; and proceed to a higher censure in November, if they should be found not to have obeyed the sentence of suspension.*

The month of August came, and the Commission met. The four men who had been censured at the bar of the Assembly had, by that very rebuke, been inaugurated as the representatives of the popular party in the Church, and the sympathies of many were gathering around them. Memorials from several presbyteries were presented to the Commission in their favour; but the Commission was unfortunately bent upon a rigorous execution of its judicial power. It insisted upon a categorical answer to the question—Were they willing to retract their protestation, and declare their sorrow for their conduct? And it was only after much angry discussion that Ebenezer Erskine was allowed to read a paper as his answer, in which, instead of expressing regret, he vindicated what he had done. "He read it," says Gib, in his "Display of the Secession Testimony," "in a very deliberate manner, and with a very audible voice; Mr Archibald Rennie, who was next year intruded into the parish of Muckart, holding the candle to him, for it was then late."†

* Acts of Assembly, p. 625.

† The case of this Mr Rennie was for two or three years before the Presbytery of Auchterarder. The presbytery warmly espoused the cause of the people of Muckart; reasoned the matter at great length with the Assembly and its Commission, instead of yielding to its order to ordain Mr Rennie; and when Rennie was ordained, after a hard battle, by a riding committee, they refused to enrol him as one of their number. After his settlement, it was reported to the presbytery that sometimes he had not more than three or four parishioners to hear him preach, and that "he had met with very uncivil and unchristian treatment." The presbytery very properly declared "its great dissatisfaction with such bad practices, and appointed the Moderator to recommend to the people of Muckart, when called in, to take care that no such thing be done in time coming, either by those in the paroch or others." This case occupies a large part of the Presbytery of Auchterarder's record about 1733–34.

The paper did not sway men who were bound both by their instructions and their own convictions to a certain course, and the four brethren were suspended from all exercise of their ministerial functions.

November came round, and again the four brethren stood at the bar of the Commission. They at once acknowledged that they had not obeyed the sentence of suspension; that they had preached and administered the sacraments as if no such sentence had been passed. Thus things had come to a crisis. Numerous petitions urged the Commission to clemency, and it was only by the casting vote of the Moderator that it was resolved to obey the injunction of the Assembly, and proceed to a higher censure. But before doing so, yet another effort was made to obtain such a concession from the contumacious presbyters as would save them from being cast out of the Church. A committee was appointed to confer with them, but they would yield nothing. The question was now put—Shall they be loosed from their respective charges, and declared no longer ministers of the Church; or shall they be deposed from the office of the ministry? The former and more lenient alternative was adopted. When the sentence was read, seven ministers entered their dissent from it, and the four ejected brethren presented a protest against what they conceived their unrighteous condemnation. They protested that the pastoral tie between them and their congregations would not be affected by the sentence of the Commission, and that they would still hold ministerial communion with such of their brethren in the Church as had not given way to the defections of the times. They testified against the prevailing party in the Church for having declined from Covenanted principles, for having suppressed ministerial freedom, for having expelled them from their fellowship. "Therefore," said they, "we do, for these and many other weighty reasons to be laid open in due time, protest that we are obliged to make a secession from them, and that we can have no ministerial communion with them till they see their sins and mistakes, and amend them. And in like manner we do protest, that it shall be lawful and warrantable for us to exercise the keys of doctrine, dis-

cipline, and government, according to the Word of God and Confession of Faith, and the principles and constitutions of the Covenanted Church of Scotland, as if no such censure had been passed upon us; upon all which we take instruments. And we hereby appeal to the first free, faithful, and reforming General Assembly of the Church of Scotland."*

The Secession from the Church had taken place. The four brethren went forth, and as they went they shook the dust from their feet. It is strange to think that a synod sermon, in which it was thought there were indecent and undutiful expressions, should have been the origin of the Secession Church. Had that sermon never been preached, or had it never been criticised, the Secession might never have taken place. Little incidents beget great results. Both parties got into a false position, and neither was willing to recede. It is certain that in Ebenezer Erskine's sermon there was nothing worthy of deposition. It is questionable if there was anything deserving of ecclesiastical censure; but even supposing there was, it had been far more prudent for the members of the synod to have passed it in silence, and simply taken care that their plain-spoken brother had never a like opportunity again of abusing them to their face. Scotch ministers had long been accustomed to great boldness of speech; and if a growing refinement was beginning to revolt against such pulpit license, it might surely have been checked by gentler measures. The disease was chronic, the medicine should have been mild.

But there was yet another blunder on the part of the Church, and the last was worse than the first. Erskine and his friends bowed themselves to the censure of the Assembly, and only desired to comfort their consciences by lodging a protest. The Assembly should have overlooked the protest, and let the matter end. It may be said that it was an act of high contumacy—that in the protest there was an open defiance of ecclesiastical authority. It is quite true; but even General Assemblies should make some allowance for irritation or obstinacy. What though these men were not yet convinced they were in the wrong? what though they

* First Testimony of the Associate Synod, p. 32.

declared they would continue to denounce laws which they thought to be iniquitous? Were they not punished already; and was a further stretch of authority likely either to convince or to silence them? The Marrow Men lodged a protest equally defiant; but the Assembly wisely overlooked it, and the Marrow controversy soon died away.

Acts of Assembly are not articles of communion. Every law written in the minute-book of the Church is not to be believed and venerated as a chapter in the Confession of Faith. These arguments of Erskine are unanswerable. Men may remain in the Church, and yet find fault with the Church. Infallibility is not claimed; the possibility of mistake is admitted. There is as much liberty of fault-finding in our republican Church as in our monarchical State. But at the same time, moderation of language and respect for the opinions of others are at least to be expected from a preacher of that gospel which makes charity the first of the virtues; and it must be allowed there are expressions in Erskine's sermon which cannot be justified on the score of propriety, as they cannot by the facts of the case. It is doubtful if the Church of Scotland ever had her parishes provided with ministers under a more liberal measure than the Act of 1732. It is difficult to show the essential difference between the Act of Assembly 1732 and the Act of Parliament 1690. It is impossible to prove that purely popular election was ever known in Scotland, and yet Erskine claimed it as the divine right of the Christian people. And because some of his brethren differed from him in these points, he compared them to the Jews who had rejected Christ, and declared that their act had no authority, as it wanted the authority of the Son of God. Ought such words to have been spoken, or, if spoken, ought they not to have been withdrawn? And even afterwards, when the Commission appointed a committee to confer with Erskine about his protest, might he not have made some concession? and is it not known that a very small concession would have saved him?*

* The proposed concession was put into this shape:—"If the next General Assembly shall declare that it was not meant by the Act of the last Assembly to deny or take away the privilege and duty of ministers to testify against

It is to be feared that pride and passion mingle in such matters more largely than we are willing to allow. It is to be feared that obstinacy sometimes takes the name of principle, and cheats even ourselves. The Assembly would not recede; Erskine would not recede; and so the schism took place.

The four Seceders immediately constituted themselves into a presbytery, and shortly afterwards published their "First Testimony to the Government, Worship, and Discipline of the Church." They narrate the steps which led to their expulsion; they sketch the history of the Church in her reforming and declining periods, and bewail the departure of Covenanting times; they charge the Church with having broken down her constitution, with harbouring heretics, with forcing hirelings on the flock, and filling up the full measure of her sin by stopping the mouths of faithful men who testified against her.

The Church had no sooner expelled the four protesters than she began to repent her of what she had done. Erskine and his brethren were men of irreproachable characters; they had friends who sympathized with them in every synod and every presbytery; the people everywhere regarded them as the champions of their rights; their congregations clung to them all the closer that they now regarded them as confessors and martyrs; and when the ministers who had been appointed to intimate their sentence from their pulpits appeared, an excited multitude forcibly withstood them. A violent reaction began.*

defections, then we shall be at liberty and willing to withdraw our protest against the said Act of Assembly; and, particularly, we reserve to ourselves the liberty of testifying against the Act of Assembly 1732 on all proper occasions." After a night's deliberation, the four brethren refused to subscribe this. See "First Testimony," pp. 29, 30.

* The feeling against patronage and in favour of the four Seceders was peculiarly strong in the Synod of Perth and Stirling, where the mischief had begun. In the spring of 1734 it agreed upon an address to be presented to the approaching Assembly, the spirit of which may be gathered from the following extracts. It begins:—"As it is agreed upon by all the members of this Church, that the yoke of patronage is a heavy grievance, which hath been complained of in the several periods wherein it was in force since the Reformation, and by the rigorous execution of it, especially of late, so much the foundation of the present confusions and divisions among us, and like to spread further discontent and dissatisfaction, both in Church and State, throughout the whole nation." The synod then proposes that the Assembly

In May 1734 the Assembly met, and at once began to put on sackcloth for the sins of its predecessors. It repealed the Act of 1730 "Discharging the Recording of Reason of Dissent," and the Act of 1732 "Anent the Method of Planting vacant Churches," on the ground that they had both been passed contrary to the provisions of the Barrier Act. It empowered the Synod of Perth and Stirling to receive Ebenezer Erskine and his adherents back into the Church. It put upon record, for the satisfaction of all, that ministerial freedom was not to be held as restrained by the decision of the preceding Assembly; in other words, that ministers fond of declaiming against the defections of the Church and the backslidings of their brethren might do it with impunity.* It appointed a deputation to proceed to London, and urge every argument to obtain the abolition of patronage.†

Never did Church so humble itself to obtain the return of its own children to its bosom. It seemed upon its bended knees to implore them to come back. It yielded up all that they asked. It repealed its own laws; it threw a slur upon its own procedure; it came down from its own high place in order to please them. They might now record their reasons of dissent from every decision of every court, with what

should petition the king and parliament for its removal, and also that it should "testify and declare its dissatisfaction with all ministers and probationers who should accept of presentations." It further proposes that the Act of Assembly 1732, which had occasioned the schism, and the Act of 1730, anent dissents, should be repealed; that the Commission of Assembly should be restrained from such tyrannous procedure as it had recently been guilty of; and finally, that some effectual means should be employed for discouraging "the method of preaching that has of late too much obtained, by harangues of mere moral virtues, to the neglect of the great and substantive doctrine of Christianity, which has created so general a disgust among the hearers of the gospel." The synod then concludes—"And whereas we in this province are in a special manner touched and affected with the dismal consequences of the censures inflicted by the late Assembly, and Commission thereof, upon four worthy brethren of our number, we do most earnestly entreat the General Assembly that, as they regard the peace and quiet of this Church, and particularly the bounds of this province, they would, in their great wisdom, take the most prudent and mild methods in order to take off the said censures, and restore them again into ministerial communion with the Church, and free exercise of their functions in their respective charges." From this it is evident that when the synod began this matter, they never dreamt it would lead to such results.

* See Acts of Assembly, year 1734.

† Moncreiff's Life of Erskine, Appendix.

longitude they chose. They might now speak out their minds as freely as they liked. No law henceforward limited the ministerial call to heritors and elders; nay, more, a deputation was on its way to London, to urge the removal of patronage entirely. Adding practice to profession, the Assembly annulled the proceedings of its Commission, which had placed a presentee at Auchtermuchty, in opposition to the wishes of both presbytery and people. Yet when the Synod of Perth and Stirling would restore the protesters to the Church, they refused to be restored.

It is certain that Wilson was willing to return, but that Erskine withstood him. We have Erskine's reasons for his conduct in a letter to the Presbytery of Stirling. "There is a great difference," says he, "betwixt a positive reformation, and a stop or sist given to a deformation." "Some brethren call us to come in and help them against the current of defection. But now that the hand of Providence has taken us out of the current against which we were swimming, and set us upon the reformation ground by a solemn testimony and constitution, it would be vain for us to endanger ourselves by running into the current again, unless our reverend brethren who call for our help can persuade us that our so doing will turn the current, and save both them and ourselves." "There is a difference to be made betwixt the Established Church of Scotland and the Church of Christ in Scotland; for I reckon that the last is in a great measure driven into the wilderness by the first. And since God in His adorable providence has led us into the wilderness with her, I judge it our duty to tarry with her for a while there, and to prefer her afflictions to all the advantages of a legal establishment."*

Erskine could not deny that the original ground of his separation from the Church was removed. He could only plead general defection from the purity of Covenanting times; the current was against him—he was not sure he could stem it—he had no pledge for the future—he thought

* Fraser's Life of Ebenezer Erskine. For a fuller exposition of the motives of the Seceders, see also their First and Second Testimonies; and their "Reasons for not acceding to the Established Church."

it better to abide on the high reforming ground where he stood. It appears from this to be very certain that he found the outer regions of dissent a more pleasant place than some imagine them to be. It was something to be the leader of a movement—the founder of a sect. It was something to occupy holier ground than the rest of his countrymen. The true Church had gone out into the wilderness, and he had gone with her—that was a soothing thought. The people offered him their incense—that was peculiarly pleasing. There would be an awkwardness in going back. It was true the Church had bowed itself in the dust before him, and had re-sought him with tears, but still he would rather dwell like a Bedouin chief in the desert, than re-enter the cities of Pharaoh and be lost in the crowd.

The Church still continued to hope for the return of the Seceders. The Presbytery of Stirling kept its Moderator's chair vacant for some time, that Erskine might come and fill it. The Assembly of 1735 despatched a second deputation to London to pray for the abolition of patronage. The Assembly of 1736, animated by the same spirit, passed an act in which it was declared, that it was, and had been since the Reformation, a principle in the Church, that no minister should be intruded into any parish contrary to the will of the congregation, and that, therefore, all presbyteries should have a due regard to that principle in planting vacant churches.* To manifest its soundness in doctrine as well as in discipline, this Assembly also passed an act enjoining all the ministers of the Word to insist continually upon the fundamental doctrines of Christianity.†

But all was in vain. The Seceders would not be won by kindness, as they had not been frightened by threats. Toward the end of 1736, they widened the gulf between them and the Church by publishing their "Judicial Testimony;" for they had pleasure in that testimony-bearing against the sins of all but themselves, which the Covenanters had loved so well. This elaborate document may be regarded as the authoritative exponent of the opinions of the first Seceders, and it is therefore proper we should look into its contents.

* Acts of Assembly, p. 641. † Ibid. p. 636.

It traces minutely the history of the Church; its reformation from Popery; its struggles with Episcopacy; its Covenanted triumphs; its dismal persecution; its time for favour at the Revolution. It dwells fondly upon Covenanting times, and declares the Covenants to be perpetually binding upon them, their children, and their children's children. It extols the Protesters and the Remonstrants to the skies. It broods mournfully over the reign of Prelacy, not so much for the blood that was spilt, as the defections that were made—the black indulgence, the sinful oaths, the toleration of Popery by the Popish James. But it is against the period following the Revolution that the "Testimony" especially lifts up its voice. Prelacy was quietly set aside, without being reprobated as an accursed thing contrary to the Word of God. The divine right of Presbytery was not declared. The Covenants were not renewed. The sins of the land were not mourned for. Hundreds of Episcopal hirelings were allowed to remain in their parishes, polluting God's sanctuary. An Union was entered into with England, inconsistent with the old Covenant union; and the maintenance of Episcopacy in England was made a fundamental article of it. As the result of this, a boundless toleration was established by law, the yoke of patronage was brought upon the Church, the Christmas Recess was ordained. All these several defections are condemned, and declared to be national sins; "and every one of them," it is said, "may be justly reckoned among the grounds and causes of the Lord's indignation and controversy with us."

But this was not all. Heterodoxy had crept into the Church; it sat in the Professor's chair; it found shelter in the Assembly. The "Marrow of Divinity" had been condemned; Professor Simson had not been excommunicated; and a more recent defaulter still, Professor Campbell, had escaped without rebuke. Everything, in fact, was going wrong. The land was polluted with profanity and horrid immorality. There were night assemblies and balls, sinful occasions of wantonness and prodigality. An idolatrous picture of Jesus Christ had been well received in some of the most remarkable places of the land. The penal sta-

tutes against witches had been repealed, in defiance of the law of God, which said, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live."—All this lay at the door of the Established Church, and therefore they lifted up their "Testimony" against it.

This singular document opens up to us what was the real cause of the Secession; the synod sermon was little more than the occasion. There were strong counter-currents of opinion in the Church. There were some who were throwing off the narrow notions of the Covenanting period, and attaining to a truer appreciation of the mild religion of the blessed Jesus. They did not reprobate Prelacy as the accursed thing; they did not count themselves bound by oaths which their grandfathers had sworn to extirpate Popery and Episcopacy, Independency and Quakerism, with fire and sword; they thought it was high time to stop the burning of every long-tongued, ill-favoured old woman, whom her neighbours declared to be a witch; they thought it was like their Master to deal tenderly with erring ones, and to use sparingly the thunders of the Church. There were others who had inherited all the bigotry and fanaticism of the preceding century—who had been uninfluenced by the more genial spirit of the day in which they lived—who talked and felt precisely like the men who had marched with the armies of the Covenant, or who had skulked among the hills from the dragoons of Claverhouse and Dalziel. The language of the "Judicial Testimony" is exactly the language of Cameron and Cargill. Shall we hesitate to say that the former had reached to an eminence unknown to the latter, from which they seemed to welcome the dawning of that day which was to be illumined by the classic eloquence of Robertson, the erudition of Macknight, and the metaphysical genius of Campbell and Reid? The Erskines, unfortunately, were not of this number.

Three times before had a schism nearly taken place, just from this struggle between the new and the old: when the Abjuration Oath was sworn; when the "Marrow" was condemned; when Simson was merely suspended for life, and not deposed or excommunicated. The Act of 1732 and the

sermon of Erskine brought to pass a rupture which had thus been thrice threatened.

The change of feeling to which we have referred begat a corresponding change in the current style of speaking and preaching. Puritanism had created a vocabulary of its own. The unctuous verbiage and the nasal twang were known in the north as well as the south of the island. In truth, our modern word "cant" is said to have taken its rise from Andrew Cant of Aberdeen, one of the most noted Covenanting ministers. The Episcopal Jacobites had long ago laughed at this spiritual dialect, and some of the Presbyterian ministers now began to join in their merriment. Among these was Professor Campbell of St Andrews, who published a treatise on Enthusiasm, in which he spoke of the phraseology in vogue as a creation of the state of mind which he wished to illustrate. Some of his sentiments were censured at the time, and may probably be thought deserving of censure still; but it is worthy of remembrance that the serious-minded Foster has ascribed a large part of the dislike which men of taste exhibit to evangelical religion to the unclassical garments in which evangelical religion is too frequently clothed. In some cases the reaction was so strong as to lead men to depart not merely from the language of Puritanism, but from the simplicity of the gospel. Young aspirants in the ministry mounted the pulpit to spout the sayings of Seneca, or perhaps to reproduce the ethics of Francis Hutchison, who was at that time lecturing with great approbation in the moral philosophy class-room of Glasgow. In a letter to Warburton, Dr Erskine, himself a student of divinity at the time, characterized such men as "paganized divines."*

* The Assembly in 1726 remitted to its Commission an "Overture anent the Method of Preaching;" and in a representation and petition signed by twenty-four influential ministers, laid before the Assembly of 1732, reference is thus made to it:—"There appears more and more need for it every day, by reason of several innovations, both in the method and strain of preaching, introduced of late by some preachers and young ministers, very offensive to many of God's people, and no small obstruction of spiritual edification. Yea, a young minister appointed to preach before his Majesty's Commissioner to the last Assembly had the assurance, even on that solemn occasion, to add to former innovations that of reading his sermon openly, though he could not

The fanaticism of the Covenanting age had lingered longest amongst the lower orders of the people, for much of their religion was necessarily traditional. As they gathered around the fire on a winter night, the grandmother told of how, with uplifted hands, they had entered into Covenant with God; how the armies of the malignants had been scattered like chaff before the breath of the Lord; and how the bloody Montrose dangled on a gibbet thirty cubits high: and the father told a sadder tale, of the servants of the Lord hunted like partridges on the mountains; and Zion laid waste; and the abominations of Babylon brought into the holy place. Traditions like these were not easily rooted out of hearts not enlightened by education, and not liberalized by intercourse with the world. Amongst such men the Seceders found their most numerous converts. The Church, on the other hand, by laying aside the roughness and rigour of the Covenanting age, was gradually gaining ground among the Episcopalian gentry, who found there were more learning and refinement in a community fostered by the State, than among a body of Nonjurors who had placed themselves beyond the pale of the law. The whole commotion, in fact, arose from the spirit of the eighteenth century attempting to crush the worn-out spirit of the seventeenth, and the spirit of the seventeenth lifting up its head and leaving its sting before it died. It was the battle of progression and retrogression.

But there were events contemporaneous with the Secession which demand our attention. We have already referred to the writings of Dr Campbell, the professor of ecclesiastical history in the University of St Andrews. He had published an "Oratio Academica," and a discourse entitled "The Apostles no Enthusiasts," in which there were sentiments deemed by many to be irreverent and reprehensible. The Committee for Purity of Doctrine took up the matter, and

but know that it would give great offence both to ministers and people of this Church, and bring a reflection on the Assembly, as if they approved thereof."

The Synod of Perth and Stirling, in its address to the Assembly of 1734 (already quoted in the note to p. 440), also deprecates the "mere moral harangues" which were substituted for the doctrines of the gospel, to the great disgust of many.

in 1736 laid their report before the General Assembly. There were four propositions to which their attention had been specially called: That man was unable by the use of his natural powers to find out the being of a God; That the law of nature was sufficient to guide rational minds to happiness; That self-love was the sole principle and motive of all virtuous and religious actions; and, That the Apostles in the interval between Christ's death and the day of Pentecost concluded Him to be an impostor. These propositions were undoubtedly capable of a bad construction; but the Professor was able to give such explanations of his meaning, that the Assembly, upon the recommendation of its committee, thought it enough to guard him and others against such ambiguous language for the future.*

In coming to this resolution, the Assembly showed that it was animated by a candour and liberality worthy of all praise. Some of the questions which had been started belong to the highest regions of moral and metaphysical science; others are fair matters of historical inquiry; and had the Church condemned Campbell, it would not have advanced the cause of religion, while it would have sent a poisoned shaft into the breast of philosophy, essaying the strength of its pinions for the first time in our country. Sir Henry Moncreiff, in his "Life of Dr Erskine," states that even Dr Campbell's enemies were constrained to allow that his intentions were pure, and his books sincerely designed for the defence of Christianity.† The truth is, Dr Campbell's writings were called forth by the circumstances of the times. It had become fashionable to assert that Christianity was merely a republication of the law of nature; and Tindall, seizing on this idea, had published his treatise, "Christianity as Old as the Creation." In this book he attempted to prove that men are able of themselves to discover all the articles of natural religion which are necessary to their happiness, and that articles of faith which lie beyond the reach of such discovery can never be admitted as a divine revelation. It was in answer to such speculations that Dr Campbell had published his treatise on "The Necessity of Revela-

* Acts of Assembly, pp. 638, 639.

† See page 38.

tion;" and if, in the heat of the battle, he goes too far, it is only as an eager combatant is apt, in the too hot pursuit of the flying foe, to lay himself open to assault.*

The year 1736 is famous for the Porteous Mob—one of the most mysterious and marvellous mobs mentioned in history. The Scotch had not yet been reconciled to the excise-laws imposed upon them at the Union. Smuggling was carried on to a prodigious extent, and to land a cargo of French brandy on the coast, and cheat the revenue, was esteemed meritorious rather than otherwise. An officer of excise had seized upon some contraband goods. The smugglers, in return, waylaid the exciseman, and eased him of as much cash as would indemnify them for their loss. This they deemed no robbery, but merely an honest reprisal; but for it they were pursued by the officers of justice, and being caught, were sentenced to death. On the Sabbath preceding their execution, according to the custom of the time, the two unhappy men were taken to church to hear sermon, and placed between three soldiers. Suddenly one of them laid hold of a guard with either hand, and, catching the third with his teeth, cried to his companion to be off, and in a moment he was out of the church and gone. This done, the man made no attempt to escape himself, but quietly resigned himself to his fate.

This noble act of self-devotion at once exalted the smuggler into a hero, and there were whispers of a rescue at the place of execution. But the day came, and the man was hung till he was dead, and still nothing was done. When the executioners, however, were proceeding to cut down the body, some stones were thrown by the crowd, and the city-guard, commanded by Captain Porteous, fired upon them, and killed several people. For this Captain Porteous was tried, and, in the excited state of public opinion, was sentenced to be hung. But many thought he had done nothing more than his duty. It was pretty certain he had not fired himself—it was not proved that he had ordered the guard to

* Moncreiff's Life of Erskine. In the "Judicial Testimony" the case of Professor Campbell is largely debated, and the lenity of the Church is pronounced one of the defections of the times.

fire—it was thought hard that he should be sacrificed to popular fury—and a petition was sent to government in his favour, and a reprieve for six weeks was the result. But the citizens of Edinburgh were not to be baulked of their prey. One evening the city-gates were suddenly seized, and the sentinels secured. At the beat of a drum the lowest wretches poured from the lanes and closes of the High Street, the Canongate, the Grassmarket, and proceeding to the Tolbooth they forced an entrance, laid hold of the unhappy object of their rage, who had in vain attempted to hide himself by creeping up a chimney, and deliberately hanged him on a dyer's pole, at the usual place of execution.

Who organized and who headed this formidable riot has never been discovered. No one ever suffered for it. But the tidings of it astonished and incensed the government against a city where law was thus openly defied. It was proposed to deprive the city of its gates and its guards, and for this purpose a bill was brought into the House of Lords. Almost the only man who opposed this measure was the Duke of Argyle, who unfortunately, in attempting to vindicate the magistrates of Edinburgh, threw the odium of the riot upon the Secession ministers, who, he affirmed, were preachers of sedition—a slander which, whatever their demerits, they did not deserve.* The bill was greatly modified in the House of Commons; the city gates and guards were preserved; but the Lord Provost was declared incapable of ever again holding any public office; the city was fined in L.2000, to be applied for the benefit of Captain Porteous's widow; and, as the result of Argyle's insinuations, all the ministers of Scotland were required to read during divine service a proclamation for the discovery of the actors in the murder, on the first Sabbath of every month for a whole year. It was an ill-judged and pernicious requirement. It converted the ministers of the gospel into messengers-at-arms. It imposed upon them the odious duty of assisting in the search for murderers, and mingled matters of blood with the sacred services of the house of God. Many of the ministers refused. Those who complied did it with a grudge, and some en-

* Struthers's History, vol. ii.

deavoured to quiet their consciences by ridiculous shifts. Of course the enemy triumphed. It was another proof of the Erastian bondage of the Established Church.

The Seceders, though still occupying the churches of the Establishment, had already constituted themselves into a separate presbytery, and appointed a professor of divinity to train up young men for the ministry. They were now joined by Ralph Erskine of Dunfermline, Thomas Muir of Orwell, Thomas Nairn of Abbotshall, and James Thomson of Burntisland, so that by 1737 they counted eight ministers, each with his own congregation, and began to call themselves the Associate Synod. It was impossible such a rent could take place in the Church without creating much bitterness of spirit and many unseemly wranglings. For instance, up to this time Ralph Erskine and his colleague at Dunfermline had lived and laboured in unity; but now, when Ralph Erskine mounted the pulpit in the forenoon, he railed against the defections and backslidings of the Established Church, and declared the necessity of coming out from her and being separate; and when Wardlaw succeeded him in the afternoon, he flatly contradicted what had been said; asserted that the members of the Associate Synod were unnatural children, and ought to have pled with their mother rather than have abandoned her; and that, at best, they were setting up altar against altar.* At Stirling, Ebenezer Erskine debarred from the communion and from a seat in the session five of his own elders who happened to differ from him in regard to his secession from the Church; and litigation, contention, and evil-speaking were the result. Foiled at law, Ebenezer attempted to avenge himself by the terrors of superstition, and from the pulpit of Stirling he summoned the five elders by name to appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, on the day determined in God's secret decree.†

It began to be felt that something must be done, and that if the Seceders could not be reunited to the Church, they must be entirely cut off from it. It would not do to

* Fraser's Life of Ralph Erskine, p. 235.

† Libel laid before the Assembly of 1739.

allow such enemies to remain within the camp. It would not be safe to allow such a gangrene to grow any longer upon the ecclesiastical body. In 1738 the Synod of Perth and Stirling laid before the Assembly a complaint "of the disorderly practices of certain Seceding ministers from this Church." In consequence of this, the Assembly enjoined all the ministers of the Church who could get access to the Seceders to use their utmost endeavours to bring them back to a sense of their duty; it authorized the Commission, if it were found necessary, to summon them before the next Assembly; and it recommended all the ministers, elders, and members of the Church to endeavour "to reclaim the poor deluded people who had been carried away by the division."

In consequence of the Assembly's instructions, several ministers invited the Seceders to a conference; but the Seceders declined to meet with them, unless they agreed to argue the points at issue not as commissioned by the Assembly, but simply as fellow-Christians. When the Commission met in November, finding that they were not to be reclaimed by argument, it appointed a committee to prepare a libel, which at its meeting in March it agreed to serve upon them.* The libel charged them with withdrawing themselves from the judicatories of the Church, constituting themselves into an independent presbytery, publishing their "Act and Declaration" and their "Judicial Testimony," licensing a young man to preach, intruding into parishes, and administering the sacraments where they had no jurisdiction, exercising discipline sometimes in defiance of sentences already pronounced by the regular courts, and otherwise following divisive courses from the Church established by law, and contrary to their ordination oaths.†

On the 10th of May 1739 the Assembly met. The great subject of debate was the libel against the members of the Associate Synod. Some were for proceeding with it, while others argued for delay. Those who were for clemency

* Morren's Annals of the Assembly, vol. i. pp. 3, 4.

† A copy of this libel, with answers to it, is published together with the Testimonies of the Associate Synod.

maintained that severity could do no good; that persecution had never diminished a sect; that it increased the flame instead of quenching it. "Besides," said they, "is it not plain the schism is decreasing? The Seceders pursue such methods as must soon reduce them to universal contempt. Can the Church have aught to fear? Is she to be shaken or overturned by a set of men who have neither power nor interest to do her any considerable prejudice? Every society should propose some good end in their public actions; and if any imagined that good would result from severity, it was a fatal mistake. It would only inflame the minds of the multitude, and tempt them to fly into yet greater extravagances." On the other side it was said, "The Church is rent by perfidious men, who had sworn to defend her. Why, then, call justice severity, or the execution of law under strong necessity persecution? What has been gained by seven years of forbearance? Have not the unhappy men been encouraged to continue in their schism? In the days of Cromwell inconsiderable sects, not being crushed in the bud, became powerful enough to overturn the Establishment. In the time following the Revolution the Church had cast out M'Millan and Hepburn, men as popular in their day as the Erskines; and now their schism was almost extinct."* These latter arguments prevailed; and it was resolved, by a small majority, to proceed with the libel.

The Seceders appeared at the bar, but they appeared as a constituted presbytery. The Church, still anxious to gain them, once more, through its Moderator, declared that if they would only return to their duty, the past would be forgiven, and they would be welcomed back with open arms. But instead of accepting this proposal, the unrelenting Seceders offered to read a declinature of the Assembly's authority which they had prepared. Accommodation was evidently hopeless. The libel was therefore read; and this done, the accused were allowed to read their declinature.†

* Morren's Annals, vol. i. pp. 5, 6. I have abbreviated the argument as given by Morren.

† Acts of Assembly, pp. 649–51. See also Acts and Testimony of the Associate Synod, p. 222.

In this document they affirmed that the ecclesiastical judicatories had received intruders into their number, and had refused to purge them out; and that whatever sham pretences might be made, and whatever fig-leaf covers might be twisted together to justify the violence thus done to the sheep of the Lord's pasture, they were warranted to affirm, that such as were imposed by mere Church authority upon dissenting and reclaiming congregations had no authority from Christ, the Chief Shepherd of the sheep, to feed the flock; that they were rather grievous wolves, who had entered in to the tearing, rending, wounding, and scattering the flock of Christ, and consequently had no warrant from the King of Zion to sit in the Courts of His kingdom. But still farther, the judicatories of the Church had for many years carried on a course of defection and backsliding from the Lord, by countenancing error and tolerating the erroneous. They had deposed neither Simson nor Campbell, and had refused to hear an accusation brought against Dr Wishart. On the other hand, they had imposed restrictions upon faithful men, who delighted to speak the truth. But this was not all. The Courts of the Church had made themselves subordinate to the civil power. They had never asserted the rights of the Redeemer's crown, in opposition to the manifold indignities done to Him, and the sinful encroachments made upon His spiritual kingdom by acts of parliament and unlawful oaths. The proclamation for the murderers of Captain Porteous had been read in the pulpits of the Establishment, and no presbytery or Assembly had lifted up its protesting voice against it. For these and other reasons, the Associate Presbytery declared that the judicatories of the national Church were not lawful or rightly constituted courts of Christ, and therefore they declined their authority. They protested that any sentence the Assembly might pass would be null and void; that their pastoral relation to their congregations would not be broken; and that any persons put in their place would be intruders. Last of all, in the bowels of the Lord Jesus Christ, they entreated all who regarded the Covenanted testimony of the Church of Scotland, and who desired to be found faithful,

to come out from the judicatories, as they would not be partakers in their sins, and to lift up the standard of a judicial testimony for the borne-down truths of God, and for purging and planting the house of God, after the example of their worthy progenitors in 1638, believing that the set time for favouring Zion would come.*

The Assembly sat and heard all this abuse heaped upon itself. It must have required the levity of an Epicurean, or the apathy of a Stoic, to have heard it with patience. When their phials were empty, the Seceders were requested to withdraw, and when they were called again they did not compear. It was their last appearance at the bar of the Church. The libel was found relevant, and enough of it proved to infer deposition; but the Assembly, mindful of the injunction of the Great Vine-Dresser, "Spare it yet another year, peradventure it may bear fruit," resolved to forbear passing any censure till its next meeting, peradventure the wanderers might yet return.†

The Associate Synod had not yet discovered the sinfulness of the Church's connection with the State. In no one of their Acts, Testimonies, or Declinatures, where every sin they could think of is laid at the door of the Church, is there the slightest whisper of such a sin as this. But, singular enough, the idea was being developed at this very period in another and very opposite quarter. Probably a majority of the Scottish clergy still counted themselves bound by the Covenants their grandfathers had sworn, and a common topic of pulpit discourse was the breach of these Covenant engagements. The Seceders especially had pleasure in such themes. This was now to be openly called in question, not upon legal, but upon high evangelical grounds. So early as 1725 the Rev. John Glass, minister of Tealing, a devoted pastor and an able man, began to preach against the Covenants, as incompatible with the spirit of the gospel dispensation and the sacred rights of conscience. Not satisfied with propounding his opinions from the pulpit, he published

* I have nearly copied, while I have abridged, this curious Act and Declinature.

† Acts of Assembly, pp. 649–51.

them in a pamphlet, which created a considerable noise, and drew forth several answers. His sentiments rested mainly upon a distinction which he drew between the Old and New Testament Churches. He argued that under the old Jewish economy the commonwealth and the Church were identical, and that to be a member of the commonwealth was to be a member of the Church. But the New Testament Church, he maintained, was a purely spiritual community, gathered out of all nations, and having no connection with the kingdoms of the world. His opinions, in fact, pointed to Independency and Voluntaryism. He was brought before the Courts of the Church, and after a lengthened trial he was deposed by the Commission in 1730.

About the same time he published his "King of Martyrs," in which his peculiar opinions are more fully developed. He also removed from Tealing to Dundee, where a few admirers gathered around him and formed the first Glassite congregation in Scotland. In 1733 he removed to Perth, where a small meeting-house was built for him. Besides ascribing a purely spiritual character to the New Testament dispensation, the Glassites revived some of the primitive New Testament practices. They celebrated the sacrament of the Supper weekly; they kept love-feasts; they saluted each other with the kiss of charity; they washed each other's feet; they refrained from things strangled, and from blood. It is not often that Wodrow jokes, but in one of his last letters he says of Glass—"The poor man is still going on in his wildnesses, and comical things are talked of his public rebukes for defects and excesses in the Christian kiss he has introduced to his meetings."*

But Glass was a good and worthy man, and the Church, at this period, was not disposed to be harsh in its discipline. The Synod of Angus and Mearns memorialized the Assembly of 1739 in favour of a man whom they esteemed, notwithstanding his novelties, and the same Assembly which prepared the way for the deposition of the Erskines, opened up a way for the restoration of Glass. By a very curious act they restored him to the character of a minister of the gospel

* Correspondence, vol. iii.

of Christ, but declared at the same time that he was not to be esteemed a minister of the Established Church till he renounced the peculiar opinions he had embraced. These opinions he never renounced. They were still further expanded by his son-in-law Sandeman; and the feeble sect still known in Scotland as Glassites, is known to the south of the Tweed as Sandemanians.

On the 8th of May 1740 the General Assembly again met, and again the principal topic of discussion was the case of the Seceders. When they were called they did not appear, and it was agreed by a large majority that the Assembly had no alternative—that it must depose them from the office of the ministry. Accordingly, on the afternoon of the 15th, they were solemnly deposed. The sentence was purposely delayed till the afternoon of the term-day, that the deposed Seceders might have a right to the stipend of the preceding half-year, for thus did the Assembly mingle mercy with judgment. But in the whole of the process, the Church exhibited a forbearance, and a desire to conciliate, which has seldom been paralleled. For eight years had the Seceders been allowed to retain their churches and draw their stipends, though all that time they had been glorying in their separation from the Establishment, and pouring calumnies upon it. They were now dislodged from their churches and deprived of their stipends, and cast upon the stream to sink or swim as they best could. It must be said they have gallantly kept their heads above the water. The truth is, the Secession Church had a popular element in its constitution which has proved to be its breath of life. When the offset was separated from the parent stock, and no longer received its nourishment, it soon struck its roots into the soil; and now, after more than a century, it flourishes as a mighty tree, under the broad shadows of which hundreds of thousands find a shelter.

CHAPTER XI.

GEORGE WHITEFIELD was now at the zenith of his renown. He preached as no man within the memory of men had preached. In truth, if we estimate oratory by its effects, this son of a tapster from the Bell Inn of Gloucester had surpassed all ancient and all modern fame. Demosthenes had not so swayed the Athenian mob, nor Bossuet the Parisian court, nor Bolingbroke the English parliament, as Whitefield swayed the motley multitudes who everywhere gathered around him. Men of all ranks acknowledged his wondrous power—colliers and coblers, ploughmen and nobles, philosophers and fools. He had preached in every county of England; he had crossed the Atlantic and lifted up his voice in America; and everywhere the effect was the same. People, careless before, but now awakened to a sense of their guilt and danger, beat upon their breasts, burst into tears, swooned away; or, passing at once from sin to salvation, they could not refrain from singing for joy.*

The great Methodist preacher was now invited by the Seceders to visit Scotland. For some time the Erskines had been corresponding with him, and mentioning him publicly in their prayers, in a way which he himself thought extravagant.† They knew that the custody of such a lion would greatly add to their popularity. The Seceders, however, did

* For a time the preaching of Whitefield was not accompanied by the same violent convulsive effects as had always accompanied the preaching of Wesley; but subsequently it was.

† Letter of Whitefield to Mr J. C., Edinburgh, August 1, 1741.

not conceal from the Methodist that they expected he would renounce his prelatic ordination, embrace Presbyterianism and the Covenants, and confine his preaching entirely to their meeting-houses. Whitefield was too large-hearted a man to be bound by such ties, and declared that he intended to visit Scotland simply as an itinerant preacher, to proclaim the gospel, and not to connect himself with any form of Church government whatever.*

On the 31st of July, Whitefield was at Dunfermline, in the house of Ralph Erskine. Ralph Erskine was perhaps the best and most liberal-minded of all the Seceders. As a preacher he did not equal his brother Ebenezer, whose declamation was bold and powerful; but he had more learning and more sense. He was fond of fun, and his love for music found vent in fiddling, to the great scandal of his elders. He wrote some rhymes called "Gospel Sonnets," in which piety and drollery are strangely commingled. He also wrote a polemical treatise, entitled "Faith no Fancy," in which he shows some talent for metaphysical disquisition. Such was the man with whom Whitefield had taken up his abode.

The host instantly began to endeavour to make a proselyte of his illustrious guest. Whitefield went so far as to say that he was ordained in his time of ignorance, and that, if it were to be done again, it would not be by a bishop.† But when Erskine wished to bargain with him that he should confine his preaching to the Seceders, Whitefield boldly said that he could refuse no call to preach Christ, whoever gave it. "Were it a Jesuit or a Mahometan," he said, "I would

* In June 1741, Ebenezer Erskine writes to Whitefield, "If you could find freedom to company with us, to preach with us and for us, and to accept of our advice in your work while in this country, it might contribute much to weaken the enemies' hands, and to strengthen ours in the work of the Lord, when the strength of the battle is against us." Whitefield replied, "I cannot but think the Associate Synod is a little too hard upon me. If I am neuter as to the particular reformation of Church government till I have more light, it will be enough. I come simply to preach the gospel, and to be received as an occasional itinerant preacher by all, and not to enter into any particular connection whatever." (Fraser's Life of Ralph Erskine, pp. 324, 325.)

† Letter, Ralph Erskine to Ebenezer Erskine, 31st July. Fraser's Life of Ralph Erskine, p. 326.

embrace it, for testifying against them." Whitefield preached that night in the meeting-house at Dunfermline; but he immediately afterwards set off to Edinburgh, where he preached in the Canongate Church. While in the metropolis he also preached on the grounds of the Orphan Hospital. When he had finished his discourse on this occasion, a Quaker saluted him. "Friend George," said he, "I am as thou art. I am for bringing all to the life and power of the ever-living God; and therefore, if thou wilt not quarrel with me about my hat, I will not quarrel with thee about thy gown."* It was a quaint lesson to the Associate Synod.

On the Wednesday following, Whitefield returned to Dunfermline to have a conference with the Seceders met in solemn conclave. He testifies that they were a set of grave, venerable men. When they were proceeding to choose a moderator, and constitute themselves into a presbytery, Whitefield asked what all this meant. He was told it was to set him right about Church government and the Solemn League and Covenant. Whitefield replied that they might save themselves the trouble, that he had no scruples upon the point, and that to preach about such matters was not his plan. Ralph Erskine, in a conciliatory tone, asked his brethren to bear a little with their Methodist friend, as he had been born and bred in England, and could not be supposed to be so perfectly acquainted with their Covenants as if he had been a Scotchman; but one of the stern Seceders replied, that no indulgence was to be shown him. Upon this Whitefield ventured to say that he had never yet made the Solemn League and Covenant the subject of his study, as he had been busy with matters which he judged of greater importance; but he was instantly told that every pin of the tabernacle was precious. Whitefield then asked them seriously what they would have him to do. He was informed, that he would not be required to subscribe the Solemn League and Covenant immediately, till he had more light; but that he must confine his preaching entirely to them. "Why confine my preaching to you?" said Whitefield. "Because we are the Lord's people," said Ralph

* Letter, Whitefield to Mr J. C., Edinburgh, August 1, 1741.

Erskine. "Are there no other Lord's people but you?" said Whitefield; "and supposing all others are the devil's people, certainly they have the more need to be preached to. I am therefore," he continued, "more and more determined to go out to the highways and hedges, and if the Pope himself will lend me his pulpit, I will gladly proclaim the righteousness of Christ therein."*

After this conference, which throws a strange light upon the different actors in it, the whole company went to the church, where one of the Seceders mounted the pulpit, gave out as his text, "Watchman, watchman, what of the night?" and, according to Whitefield, so spent himself upon Prelacy, surplices, and prayer-books, that his breath went out, and he had little to say of Jesus. The consequence of all this was an open rupture. "I retired," says Whitefield, "I wept, I prayed, and, after preaching in the open fields, sat and dined with them, and then took a final farewell."† The Seceders now denounced the stubborn Methodist as an agent of the devil; but many of the pulpits of the Established Church were thrown open to him, and where he could not find a pulpit, he preached in the market-place or the fields. Immense multitudes gathered around him, and all felt themselves swept along by the full gushing tide of his oratory.

But we must now transport ourselves to the parish of Cambuslang, where, during the spring of 1742, strange symptoms of a religious revival began to appear. These occurred not under the stirring preaching of Whitefield, for he had never been there, but under the ministry of Mr M'Culloch, the pastor of the parish, who is described as a man of genuine piety and good ability, but by no means remarkable as a preacher. At the request of his parishioners this good man had commenced a weekly lecture in addition to his usual Sabbath services, and some of his parishioners had begun to call upon him at the Manse, in deep concern about the state of their souls. One evening, in the month of February, he happened to exclaim, in the course of his

* Letter, Whitefield to Mr J. N., New York, 8th August.

† Letter, Whitefield to Mr J. N., 8th August. Fraser's Life of Ralph Erskine, pp. 330, 331.

lecture, "Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? upon which some persons cried out in the meeting in great distress because of their sins. From this evening such scenes became common. Every night the people gathered together to hear the Word preached to them by Mr M'Culloch or some of his friends, and every night men and women were so violently agitated as to be unable to restrain their feelings. Some clapped their hands, others beat upon their breasts, others trembled and shook like the Delphic priestess when about to deliver her oracles. Some bled profusely at the nose, and others fell into convulsions. These bodily agitations were only the symptoms of a still more violent agitation of soul. Women who had borne children declared that they had never, during child-bearing, suffered such violent throes as they had when they themselves were being born anew. They thought they saw hell opening to receive them—they thought they already heard the shrieks of the damned. Those who were thus plunged into the depths of despair were generally soon afterwards elevated to the highest regions of ecstacy. They had passed from darkness into a marvellous light; they clearly saw Christ with a pen in His hand blotting out their sins; they could now exclaim—"Lord, let thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." Sometimes, rising up in the congregation, they would call upon all to join with them in singing a psalm, which they said God had commanded them to sing.

There were two men—More, a shoemaker, and Bowman, a weaver—who had heard Whitefield preach in Glasgow, and who, from the first, were conspicuous in helping on the revival at Cambuslang. When any one was affected they were generally at hand. Thus, on one occasion, when a woman had fainted and began to revive, Bowman said to her, "Christ is coming, He is on His way, He will not tarry;" and, after a pause, More added, "Do you hear the sound of His chariot-wheels?" As if she really heard them, the woman instantly started up in a transport of joy, shouting "He is come! I have got Him, and will not let Him go!"

The news of all this soon spread, and multitudes from

every part of Scotland crowded to Cambuslang to see the Lord's strange work. Among these came many ministers, some from curiosity, some to test the reality of the religious phenomena, some to help M'Culloch in his toils. M'Laurin of Glasgow, Webster of Edinburgh, Robe of Kilsyth, and many others, came and preached to the excited congregations who daily clustered around the tent. Conspicuous in every audience were a number of men and women, seated by themselves, and with napkins tied round their heads. These were they who, during the preceding day, had been brought under a conviction of their sins, and who now sat sobbing bitterly because of them.

Whitefield had returned to England, but in June he was once more in Scotland, and it was not long till he was at Cambuslang, increasing the excitement by his impassioned oratory. In the month of July, and again in the month of August, was the sacrament of the Supper dispensed. On the latter occasion the revival reached its culminating point. Thirty thousand people were gathered together. These were divided into three separate congregations. During the course of the day fourteen ministers had preached; twenty-five tables had been filled with communicants anxious to take into their trembling hands the consecrated bread and wine. It was ten o'clock at night when Whitefield rose up to address the whole multitude. The tent stood on the margin of a little stream; in front of this rose a green bank in the form of an amphitheatre, still known as "the conversion brae." It was wonderfully adapted to the purpose to which it was now applied, and Whitefield, in one of his bold figures of speech, spoke of it as a temple built by God Himself for this great concourse to worship in. As the preacher's deep voice, in the twilight of the autumn eve, rolled over the vast multitude, it was answered by sighs and sobs, and soon the whole audience was melted in tears.

After this no other such spectacle occurred; the overflowing flood of feeling subsided, and shrank into its usual channel. The state of tension had been so great that the mind could bear it no longer, and suddenly relaxed. Like an epidemic, the religious revival had mysteriously come, and it now as

mysteriously disappeared. In speaking of it nine years afterwards, the minister had to lament many backsliders; but still he spoke of hundreds who from that time forward had been evidently changed.*

Different people viewed the "Cambuslang work" in different lights. The Seceders, who arrogated all piety to themselves, and could not believe that any good thing could come out of the Establishment, ascribed it to the devil. They wrote against it, preached against it, and appointed the 4th of August to be observed as a day of fasting and humiliation through their whole body, for the countenance given to Whitefield, "a priest of the Church of England, who had sworn the Oath of Supremacy, and abjured the Solemn League and Covenant," and for "the symptoms of delusion attending the present awful work upon the bodies and spirits of men going on at Cambuslang." The old Cameronians, now transmuted into M'Millanites, ranked themselves by their side. It was impossible, they argued, that a Church so Erastian could be favoured of God. They published "The Declaration, Protestation, and Testimony of the Suffering Remnant of the anti-Popish, anti-Lutheran, anti-Prelatic, anti-Whitefieldian, anti-Erastian, anti-Sectarian, true Presbyterian Church of Christ in Scotland, against Mr George Whitefield and his encouragers, and against the work at Cambuslang and other places." They denounced "the Laodicean ministers, whose ways were such as might astonish the heavens, and make them horribly afraid;" they charged them with changing their paths, "by going in the way of Egypt and Assyria to drink the waters of Sihor and the river, even the poisonable puddles of Prelacy and Sectarianism;" they pronounced Whitefield "an abjured prelatic hireling, of as lax toleration principles as any that ever set up for the advancing of the kingdom of Satan;" they said his followers were "like the children of Israel

* I have taken this account of the Cambuslang Revival chiefly from the statement of Dr Meek, minister of Cambuslang, in the Original Statistical Account of Scotland, vol. v., and from a letter of Mr M'Culloch, printed in the second vol. of Struthers's History of Scotland. Robe's Narrative of the Extraordinary Work of God at Cambuslang, Kilsyth, &c., is very full, but it is one-sided.

when, in an unsanctified fit of madness, they danced about the golden calf, to the dishonour of God and their own shame;" and, finally, they declared that it looked "as if the devil had come down to Scotland, having great power, because he knew that he had but a short time."*

Such sentiments and such language could not fail to shock many serious-minded men. They believed the "Cambuslang work" to be the result of a Pentecostal outpouring of the Spirit of God; and to speak of it as a delusion of the devil appeared to them nothing less than blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. Robe of Kilsyth declared that the act of the Associate Presbytery "was the most heaven-daring paper which had been published by any set of men in Britain for a century past." Between these two contending parties there were some who thought that the phenomena witnessed at Cambuslang need be ascribed neither to God nor the devil—that sympathy and imitation, under the influence of strong excitement, were sufficient to account for them all.

We shall not err greatly from the truth if we attribute all that was peculiar in the revival at Cambuslang—the contortions of the body, the shouting, the singing—to feelings which are native to the mind, and which may at any time be brought by circumstances into powerful operation. Persons have often died purely from the power of imagination. Both hope and fear not unfrequently cause convulsions. So sympathetic and so imitative is man, that, let a panic arise in a congregation, or even in an army, and it will immediately spread to every individual, and turn the bravest into cowards. Moreover, the change which is wrought in the heart by the Spirit of God is not necessarily nor even usually accompanied by violent bodily agitations. The kingdom of God cometh not with observation. We are warranted to believe that such changes are going on around us, and yet they are accompanied by no fainting fits or bleedings at the nose. In some Highland districts the people swing to and fro and make strange noises when

* This strange document is quoted by Mr Burton, in a note appended to his History of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 301. I have not seen it elsewhere.

listening to an arousing preacher; but yet there is no reason to believe that conversion takes place more frequently amid such agitations of the body than amid the proprieties and decorum of a town congregation. We must therefore attribute all that was peculiar in the revival at Cambuslang to peculiar circumstances. But, at the same time, we must attribute every actual conversion which occurred to the Spirit of God, as we are taught by our Bibles to believe that no less an agency can work such a change. Religious revivals are undoubtedly deserving of more attention, both from physiologists and divines, than they have hitherto received.*

It was in the Assembly of 1742 that the Ministers' Widows' Fund originated. It had long been felt that some such scheme was necessary. When the husband and the father died, the widow and children were turned out of the manse, and too frequently consigned to indigence. So early as 1718 the Assembly had recommended that each minister should dedicate the tenth of his stipend for one year for the relief of the widows and orphans of his deceased brethren, and the injunction was repeated in 1728, and again in 1735; but not being imperative it never became operative. At this period it was customary to make a collection every year at the meeting of the Assembly for the relicts and children of ministers left in poverty.†

To Dr Alexander Webster, minister of the Tolbooth, Edinburgh, the Church is chiefly indebted for having originated and brought to maturity the Widows' Fund. All his contemporaries describe Dr Webster as a remarkable man—possessed of a native dignity of manner, readiness of wit, and fluency of speech. When minister of Culross, he was solicited by a friend to bespeak for him the affections of

* The "Revivals" in the north of Ireland, which have recently startled the religious world, have revived the old question. Most sober-minded men are of opinion that religion does not require so excited an atmosphere to live in. The "Lancet" has properly devoted more than one article to the subject, and declares that the symptoms are well known in the medical world, and are attributable to certain kinds of hysteria.

† Morren's Annals of the Assembly, vol. i. p. 28. Sometimes ministers' widows were left so poor that they were assisted out of the funds of the kirk-session. The following entry occurs in the accounts of the kirk-session of Crieff:—"1709, Oct. 9. Mrs Strachan, the minister of Weems' relict, 12s."

a lady of fortune residing in the parish. Webster pled the cause of his employer with such hearty eloquence, that the lady naively remarked, that he had succeeded better had he spoken for himself. He did speak for himself, and the lady became his wife. After he was removed to Edinburgh he soon acquired great popularity as a preacher, and his preaching was of the most purely evangelical kind. When the thousands were gathered at Cambuslang, Webster was there. But neither the high pitch of his evangelicism, nor the solemn scenes he had witnessed on the "Conversion Brae," could restrain his love for conviviality. In too many jolly companies the minister of the Tolbooth was the jolliest of all. No one in the city could joke with him; no one could drink with him; when all others were drunk, Dr Webster was still perfectly sober. What is strangest of all, this delight in boon companionship never lessened in the slightest degree the high estimation in which he was held.

But Dr Webster was much more than a mere toper and jester; he was a benevolent man. He was a profound statistician at a time when statistics were very little known. Soon after his settlement in Edinburgh he began to collect information, and to make calculations as to the rates that would require to be imposed upon every minister of the Church to furnish small annuities to their widows. Such computations, easy now, could not be accomplished then without much ingenuity and labour. But Webster set himself to the work, and did it. In these labours he was greatly assisted by Dr Robert Wallace, one of the ministers of St Gile's, an able mathematician, and distinguished as a political economist by his ingenious "Dissertation on the Numbers of Mankind," a book which contains the germ of some of the principles afterwards developed by Malthus in his "Essay on Population."

When the scheme was first laid before the Assembly, it was proposed that every stipend should be assessed in an equal sum, not exceeding L.4 yearly, and that out of the fund thus collected every minister's widow remaining unmarried should receive an annuity of L.20. This plan, however, was afterwards considerably modified; it was made

to apply to the children as well as the widows of deceased clergymen, and an option of different rates was allowed, with corresponding annuities. In 1743 the Assembly approved of the scheme, and resolved to apply for an act of parliament to make it obligatory.* The act was obtained, and in March 1744 it came into force. It has, however, been subsequently twice altered by authority of parliament.

Up to 1742 Sir Robert Walpole had maintained his place at the head of the government. His term of power, unexampled for duration, was owing both to his great dexterity in managing men, and to a system of corruption so wide spread that we now find it hard to believe that such things could have been done so recently in our country. But he was at length obliged to yield to the clamours of the Opposition and the strong tide of public opinion. He found retirement in the House of Peers under the title of Earl of Orford. Under the new ministry, the Marquis of Tweeddale had the chief direction of Scotch affairs. Dr Wallace was the man he generally consulted upon matters connected with the Church. We have already spoken of Dr Wallace in connection with the Widows' Fund. He was a distinguished political economist, an elegant preacher, an accomplished man; and in his old age found relief from severer studies, and at the same time showed the versatility of his talents, by writing notes on Giovanni Galinni's "Treatise on the Art of Dancing"—an odd employment for an aged doctor of divinity. But every art, and this among others, is based upon a science. Be this as it may, the Doctor was universally respected, and the Crown patronages were so managed by him that scarcely a single dispute arose about any settlement in which he was concerned. Up to this time the Crown patronage, in the Church as in the State, had too frequently been used to subserve political purposes; but the royal presentations were now generally given to such ministers as were desired by the holders of land in the parish, provided they were not obnoxious to the people.†

In the Assembly of 1744 there was an act passed against smuggling, as a practice which encouraged cheating and

* Morren's Annals, vol. i. p. 38. † See Memoir of Dr Wallace by his son.

lying.* It was not the first act of the kind; and there was great need of the Assembly's care, as smugglers were busy all along the coast. But neither the persuasions of the Church nor the terrors of revenue-officers could put an end to a practice which the mass of the people did not yet conceive to be a sin. Moreover, the smugglers were now bringing into the country new articles of luxury. They were landing not merely kegs of brandy, but chests of tea; and the people were beginning to use this new beverage in place of "twopenny" at their morning meal. It is amusing to read some of the documents of the time in which this article, now almost a necessary of life, is spoken of as sure to enervate the human constitution and ruin the State! Resolutions against its use were entered into by many counties and towns. Total abstinence societies were formed. A body of farmers declared it "a consumptive luxury, fit only for those who could afford to be weak, indolent, and useless." Even President Forbes, one of the most enlightened and patriotic men of his time, attributes almost all the misfortunes of the day to "the villanous practice," and mourns over the degeneracy of a people who could give up their wholesome beer for such a vile drug.†

We have already referred to the change which had come over the usual style of preaching in the Church. The preacher began to aim at purity of language, and, if his genius permitted, not unfrequently illustrated his subject by a reference to the principles of mental or moral philosophy. The unending divisions and subdivisions of the preceding century were discarded. The old custom of making every sermon contain a complete body of divinity was laid aside. One subject was fixed upon, and the whole attention was rivetted to it. Sometimes, to the indignation of many, both among ministers and people, the manuscript was taken to the pulpit—a practice which had hitherto been esteemed characteristic of the Episcopal clergy. Such novelties of course created asperities. Men of the old school began to see laxity of principle, unsoundness of faith, Arminianism,

* Acts of Assembly, p. 675.

† Struthers's History, vol. ii. p. 79. Morren's Annals, vol. i. p. 61.

Socinianism, Atheism, in these modern sermonizers. Hence they were continually intimating that there was a scent of heresy where no heresy was. They dragged Professor Campbell before the Church Courts, charging him with teaching that self-love lay at the basis of religion; they arraigned Dr Wishart,* singularly enough, for teaching the very opposite—that self-love was not a religious motive. The Assembly wisely acquitted both. They accused Professor Campbell of denying that a man could discover the being and attributes of God without a revelation; and now, as we shall immediately see, they accused Dr Leechman for asserting it.

Dr Leechman, while minister of Beith, had preached a course of sermons on prayer. About the same period a pamphlet had got into circulation, the drift of which was to show that prayer was an absurd and unreasonable, or rather an impious and blasphemous, practice—a vain and superstitious attempt to alter the counsels of the Unchangeable. The pamphlet is now forgotten, but the argument is not; it has frequently been revived. In these circumstances Dr Leechman condensed what he had said in the pulpit, retaining chiefly what he considered was an answer to the pamphlet, and published it, hoping that his sermon would act as an antidote to the poison which had been spread among the young. The sermon bore the marks of a devout heart, as

* This Dr Wishart was Principal of the University of Edinburgh. In 1738 he was prosecuted before the Church Courts for heresy. The main charge against him was, "That he profanely diminished the due weight and influence of arguments taken from the awe of future rewards and punishments." The Assembly fully acquitted him. Dr Erskine says that he "was unjustly accused of heresy for maintaining that true religion is influenced by higher motives than self-love." In 1745 he was raised to the Moderator's chair. He was brother of Dr George Wishart, minister of the Tron Church, and regarded as one of the finest preachers of his day. Of him Henry Mackenzie has left us this interesting sketch:—"Of George Wishart, the figure is before me at this moment. It is possible some who hear me may remember him. Without the advantage of that circumstance, I can faintly describe his sainted countenance—that physiognomy so truly expressive of Christian meekness, yet in the pulpit often lighted up with the warmest devotional feeling. In the midst of his family society—a numerous and amiable one—it beamed with so much patriarchal affection and benignity, so much of native politeness, graced with those manners which improve its form without weakening its substance, that I think a painter of the apostolic school could have nowhere found a more perfect model." (Life of Home.)

well as of a cultivated understanding; it was much read and admired, and in the course of a few months reached a second edition. The author was soon afterwards made Professor of Divinity in the University of Glasgow, and he appears to have been deserving of the honour. He was an accomplished scholar, of a metaphysical turn of mind; and we have the authority of Sir Henry Moncreiff for saying, that "he was a man of primitive and apostolic manners, equally distinguished by his love of literature and his liberal opinions."* In appearance he was like an ascetic monk, reduced to a skeleton by fasting and prayer.†

But the minister of Beith was not raised to the academic chair with universal approbation. He was said to be too abstruse in his preaching; his sermon on prayer was pronounced a Christless sermon; and it was insinuated that he might affect the aspirants to the ministry with his dry morality.‡ These views soon found an exponent. An elder rose up in the Presbytery of Glasgow, said that many had been offended by Dr Leechman's sermon on prayer, and moved that inquiry should be made as to the orthodoxy of its contents. A committee was accordingly appointed to examine the suspicious discourse.

The committee met, drew up some condemnatory remarks upon the discourse, and then allowed the Professor to append his answers. The chief objection taken to the sermon was, that it did not specially state that all our prayers to God must be offered in the name and for the sake of Christ. To this Dr Leechman replied, that his sermon was never intended to be a perfect exposition of every part of prayer; that it was written with a special object, and that therefore he had confined his argument within a limited range; that it was no part of his design to explain the ground of acceptance in prayer, but to show that the offering up of our desires to God was agreeable both to the promptings of our heart and the lessons of our Bible. He appealed to other sermons which he had preached and published to show that

* Life of Erskine, p. 85.

† Carlyle's MS. Memoirs, quoted in Appendix to Morren's Annals.

‡ Robe of Kilsyth, who published an account of Leechman's trial.

he was very far from regarding the merits and mediation of Christ "as foreign and superfluous circumstances of which prayer should be stripped." The only other objection of any weight which the presbytery's committee made to the sermon was, that the author seemed to insinuate that some men without the aid of revelation were capable of reasoning out for themselves such a knowledge of God as might lead to their attaining eternal happiness. Dr Leechman denied that any such sentiment was contained in his discourse, and challenged proof. He had said that a heathen might, by the light of nature, arrive at a knowledge of God and His attributes, but nothing more. He had indeed used an *argumentum ad hominem;* but it amounted to no more than this, that even Deists, who thought a system of religion could be reasoned out by the light of nature, must acknowledge that revelation was a much easier way of attaining it, and much more fitted to the capacities and situation of the bulk of mankind.

Before the presbytery came to a decision, Dr Leechman carried his case by complaint to the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr. That court met then, as it does still, in the month of April. If the Professor of Divinity had his enemies he had also his friends, and when the synod assembled it was more than usually crowded. Men of high rank, elders of the Church, who had not been seen in an ecclesiastical judicatory for years, were now in their place. The papers were produced, and the remarks of the presbyterial committee and the replies of the professor read one by one. Some members of the court asked for explanations, and Dr Leechman, who was present, readily gave them. In fine, the synod, with scarcely a dissentient voice, found that the answers of the Professor were quite satisfactory, and that there was no reason to charge him with unsoundness in the faith.*

The case was brought by appeal before the Assembly which met in May 1744; but the Assembly had no difficulty in affirming the decision of the synod, and declaring that Dr Leechman had given abundant satisfaction concerning his orthodoxy.† The good feeling of the House was so con-

* Morren's Annals, vol. i. pp. 46–60. † Acts of Assembly, pp. 676–77.

spicuous, that the Moderator alluded to it in his closing address. "In that case," said he, "of more than ordinary delicacy, the accusation of a professor of divinity for heresy, have we not seen the beauty of Christian charity, in condescension, on the one hand, to remove offence, and readiness, on the other, to embrace satisfaction?"* In truth, it would have been very sad if the synod or the Assembly had come to a different result. The Professor was arraigned not for what he had said, but for what he had not said. He was blamed not for denying the mediation of Christ, but for not mentioning it. His imputed sin was purely negative. Are there not whole chapters even in the Pauline Epistles where the atonement of Christ is not once alluded to? Are there not passages in which we are urged to pray, to pray alway, to pray without ceasing, and not told that our prayers must be offered up in the name of the Great Mediator? Might not the mode of reasoning which led to the arraignment of Leechman have led to the arraignment of the evangelists and apostles?

But the country was again on the eve of a rebellion; and the Assembly of 1744, in an address to the king, mentioned their fears, and declared their loyalty.† The French invasion, to which the Assembly referred, did not take place; and in May 1745, when the Assembly again met, though war was raging abroad, there was perfect peace and security at home. But two months afterwards Charles Stewart, generally known as the Pretender, landed on the coast of Lochaber. He was almost alone, and brought with him only a few stands of arms; but he was soon joined by Cameron of Lochiel and other Highland chiefs, who still clung to the exiled dynasty. Descending from the mountains of Inverness like a torrent suddenly swollen by rain, he filled the whole low country with alarm, and made himself master of Perth and Dundee. He was now joined by the young claimant of the dukedom of Perth, who, amid the gaieties and dissipation of fashionable life, had been long looking forward to such a day; by Viscount Strathallan, Lord Nairn, and Lord George Murray.

* See Appendix to Morren's Annals, vol. i. † Acts of Assembly, p. 675.

At the head of three thousand mountaineers, all trained to their own wild way of warfare, the prince marched southward, crossed the Forth to the west of Stirling, and appeared suddenly under the walls of Edinburgh. The magistrates and citizens had talked of resistance, but their courage deserted them when the enemy was at the gate, and a surrender was proposed. But they were saved the trouble of arranging its terms, for a party of Celts managed to get admittance to the city by night, and, throwing open the gates to their comrades, before morning the capital was at their mercy. The castle, however, secure upon its rock, bid them defiance. Once more the Stewart kept court at Holyrood.

Sir John Cope, who commanded the royalist forces in Scotland, had marched northwards on the first intelligence of the Highland gathering; but getting entangled among the mountains, and afraid to face the enemy in a narrow defile, he insanely proceeded to Inverness, and left the whole south exposed to the Celts. From Inverness he marched to Aberdeen, and, embarking his troops there, he took them by sea to Dunbar, and thus interposed himself between England and the rebels. Reinforced by two regiments of dragoons, who had retired from Edinburgh on the approach of the bagpipes, he moved northwards in order to relieve the capital. The Gael came out to meet him. The battle of Prestonpans was fought. The dragoons, panic-struck by the savage yells and furious onset of the kilted clansmen with their terrible broadswords, wheeled round and disgracefully left the field. The good and the gallant Colonel Gardiner fell, while attempting to rally the broken regiments. The whole royalist army was instantly in confusion. The victory of the Pretender was complete.

The strength of the English army was in Flanders. England was almost destitute of troops. The king himself was in Hanover. Had Charles at once pursued his victory, he might have appeared in the suburbs of London before the nation had recovered from its alarm, or been able to make preparations for defence. But he wasted his precious hours at Holyrood in idle state, pleased by the blandishments of the Jacobite ladies who graced his court.

Meanwhile George II. returned from Hanover; the Duke of Cumberland and some thousands of veteran troops were recalled from Flanders; and Admiral Vernon, with a powerful fleet, scoured the Channel, and watched the French ports, where an expedition was preparing to second the efforts of the Pretender. In the beginning of November the rebel army entered England, six thousand strong, and, meeting with little opposition, took possession of Carlisle, Preston, Lancaster, and Manchester. Wherever he came, the Pretender proclaimed his father King of Great Britain and Ireland. But though the march of the host had been prosperous, few came to join it. The multitudes who were to flock to the Stewart standard, when once raised, never appeared. There was deep disappointment and chagrin. Still the Celts kept their faces southward; and evading the Duke of Cumberland, who lay at Litchfield with a strong army, they arrived at Derby, within a hundred and twenty-five miles of the capital.

But now the Highland chiefs lost heart and refused to proceed farther, though Charles, trusting to the good fortune which had hitherto attended him, earnestly urged an advance upon London. A retreat was commenced. The retreat of a body of men only half disciplined, as these plaided warriors were, is generally disastrous; but this retreat, though conducted in the midst of winter, through a hostile country, in the face of two armies, was rather glorious. The cavalry of the pursuers were more than once repelled with slaughter, and the Highlanders crossed the Border in safety. In their march through the Lowlands, they levied a contribution upon Glasgow, and entering the town of Stirling, began the siege of its fortress. General Hawley advanced with nine thousand men to relieve the garrison, but was attacked by the rebels at Torwood, and driven back to Falkirk, leaving three hundred of his troopers dead upon the field.

The whole south of Scotland was actively loyal. The Presbyterian pulpits sent forth no uncertain sound. The dread of Popery and arbitrary power was still strong. Contributions were levied; regiments were raised. Even the Cameronians, though they had testified against both the

Georges as uncovenanted kings, took down the muskets their grandfathers had carried with them to the moors, and prepared them for use. The Seceders were equally loyal. Ebenezer Erskine, though now an old man, presented himself one night at the guard-room in Stirling, when an attack from the rebels was apprehended, in full military accoutrements. When some of his friends advised him to go home to his prayers, as more suitable to his age and vocation, he manfully replied, "I am determined to take the hazard of the night along with you, for the present crisis requires the arms as well as the prayers of all good subjects."*

All therefore welcomed the Duke of Cumberland, who now advanced with a veteran army and a powerful train of artillery. The Highlanders knew that it would have been madness to have fought him where they were, and instantly began a retreat toward their own mountain fastnesses. The duke slowly followed them. Crossing the Spey, he came up with them on Culloden Moor—a bleak, unfenced, and almost level tract of country. The Highlanders could not have chosen worse ground to fight on; and by making their stand there, they threw away every advantage which their own peculiar mode of battle in their own country gave them. Infantry, cavalry, artillery could all go threw their evolutions with perfect ease, and sweep the entire plain. There could be no surprise. There was no bog in which the horses might sink up to their girths. There was no precipice from which the mountaineers could roll down huge stones upon the soldiers as they clambered up the narrow defile. The result was scarcely doubtful. The Highlanders discharged their pieces, and rushed on with their broadswords in their usual gallant fashion; but a terrible fire mowed them so down as they advanced that they never reached the bayonets of the royalist regiments. They turned and fled. In a few minutes the whole plaided multitude were running from the field; and the dragoons, who had been twice charged, twice discomfited, and twice disgraced by these foot combatants, now found a safe revenge by pursuing them, and most mercilessly butchering them in their flight.

* Fraser's Life of Ebenezer Erskine, p. 439.

The Duke of Cumberland, though a young man of but twenty-five, had shown that he was possessed of military genius worthy of the illustrious house from which he was sprung; but he forgot mercy in the hour of victory, and stained his laurels with a needless effusion of civic blood. It is not in the Highlands alone that he is execrated to this day as the Royal butcher.

Prince Charles, from a small eminence behind the first line of his battle, saw his gallant Highlanders falling in heaps, staggering, flying; and, turning his horse's head to the west, he escaped along the south-east bank of Loch Ness. For five months afterwards was he hunted from glen to glen, and from island to island. Thirty thousand pounds were offered for his head. But Highland faith was found to be incorruptible; female devotion came to his aid; and after such escapes and hardships as a romancer would scarcely venture to tell, he managed to get on board a vessel and sailed for France.

The battle of Culloden was fought upon the 16th of April; and by the time the Assembly met in May, not only was the neck of the Rebellion broken, but the country was again quiet.* The Assembled divines drew up a congratulatory address to his Majesty, and despatched a congratulatory letter to the victorious duke. They appointed a day of thanksgiving for their deliverance from the Pope and the Pretender; and when that day came, every Presbyterian pulpit was vocal with Cumberland's praise.†

* There was much perplexity about the meeting of this Assembly. The 8th of May was the day appointed; but when the 8th of May came, the Earl of Leven's commission had not arrived. On the 8th, however, the Assembly met, and the Moderator of the preceding Assembly preached; but the election of a new Moderator was delayed, and the 8th and 9th were spent in devotional exercises, according to custom. On the 9th an express arrived with the commission to the Earl of Leven, but by some mistake he was not authorized to act till the 16th. The Assembly was in a strait. Some were for delaying till the 16th, some were for proceeding to business at once. It was ultimately resolved to choose the new Moderator, and nominate the usual committees, for facilitating the business of the House, and nothing more, till the Commissioner could take his seat. Thus the Church maintained its old claim to hold Assemblies upon its own authority, and at the same time got the sanction of the Crown to all its acts.

† After the rising of the Assembly a letter arrived from the Duke, addressed

Many of the Episcopal clergy were deeply implicated in the Rebellion. In fact, as the Presbyterians were almost to a man Hanoverians, the Episcopalians were almost to a man Jacobites. When such was the case, it need scarcely be wondered at that the Duke of Cumberland wreaked his anger upon them. Wherever he came he burned their chapels, and in the district where the campaign lay there were many such buildings, for there Episcopacy was strong.

The fire-raising of the duke was followed by an act of parliament which nearly exterminated Episcopacy in Scotland. It provided that, after the 1st of September, "every person exercising the function of a pastor or minister in any Episcopal meeting-house in Scotland, without registering his letters of orders, and taking all the oaths required by law, and praying for his Majesty King George and the royal family by name, should for the first offence suffer six months' imprisonment, and for the second be transported to some one of his Majesty's plantations for life." Every house in which five or more persons besides its usual occupants assembled for worship was declared to be a meeting-house; and no letters of orders were henceforward to be registered but such as had been given by some bishop of the Church of England or of Ireland. Such were the penalties imposed upon the clergy. Those laid upon the laity were proportionally severe. If any one attended an illegal Episcopal meeting, and did not give information within five days, he was to be fined or imprisoned. If any peer was twice guilty of this crime, he could neither be chosen a representative peer, nor vote in the election of another; and if any commoner were so guilty, he could not sit in parliament for burgh or shire.* Stringent though the measure was, it was not opposed even by the English bishops. It was felt to be necessary for the safety of the State.

Under the pressure of this statute, a few, and only a few, of the Episcopal clergy took the oaths to government, and began to pray for the reigning family; the rest continued to

to the Lord Commissioner, extolling the active loyalty of the Presbyterian clergy, and which was entered in the Records of the Assembly.

* Stephen's History, vol. iv.

exercise their sacerdotal functions in private, taking care, where discovery was possible, that the number of persons present at their meetings did not exceed the number prescribed by law. But two years afterwards new rigours were prepared for them. It was provided by a new act, that no orders whatever should be recognised in Scotland but such as were granted by English or Irish bishops. This was to annihilate the Scotch episcopate. Henceforward Scotch orders, though held by loyal men, were unlawful. No Scotch Episcopalian could now preach, or baptize, or give the Eucharist, without being cast into prison for it. Bishops Sherlock and Secker strenuously opposed this measure; the whole episcopal bench refused it their support; and we must honour them for their conduct.* The Scotch Episcopalians were undoubtedly deeply dyed in treason; but no punishment—for no crime—should compel a man to render up his religion, or be false to his Church. If he can be proved to be a traitor, let him be punished as a traitor; but let him worship, even on the scaffold, as he pleases. It is indeed true that if some peculiar form of religion be the cause of crime, it must be put down, for no State can suffer anything destructive of itself. But this could not, without awkward consequences, be said of Episcopacy. It was not these men's Episcopacy that made them Jacobites; it was rather their Jacobitism that kept them Episcopalians.

Meanwhile the Seceders, not satisfied with having quarrelled with the Established Church, began to quarrel among themselves. The Burgess Oath was their apple of discord. This oath had a clause in which the burgess swore, "that he professed and allowed within his heart the true religion presently professed within the realm, and authorized by the laws thereof." Could the members of their Church any longer take such an oath? One party—with the Erskines at their head—declared that they had no scruples upon the subject; that there was no harm in swearing obedience to the true religion, by which could only be meant the religion they themselves, the true Church, professed. Another party declared that they could not in conscience take such an oath,

* Stephen's History, vol. iv.

or allow the members of their congregations to take it. The true religion, they said, was defined as the religion authorized by the law. They must take the phrase in its restricted meaning. There could be no mistake as to the religion meant by the framers of the oath. It was the religion of the Established Church, here declared to be true, though they had declared it to be false. Every Seceder, therefore, who took this oath stultified himself, by swearing obedience to the legal religion, albeit he had lifted up several testimonies against it. The man who took both the Covenant Oath and the Burgess Oath virtually perjured himself.

In April 1746 the Associate Synod came to the conclusion that the Burgess Oath could not be taken by the members of their body; and that those who had already taken it must appear before their respective kirk-sessions, and confess their sense of the snare into which they had fallen, in order to their admission into the bond for renewing the Covenants. But this resolution was by no means unanimously come to. Nearly a half of the synod protested against it. The flame thus kindled in the supreme court soon spread to every kirk-session and congregation connected with the body. The earnestness with which such questions are discussed in small religious communities is in proportion to their diminutiveness. Every member, and especially every elder, feels that he is called upon to judge and to speak out. Hence the keenness and acrimony with which this paltry matter was canvassed. Books were written on either side. Angry reproaches were freely exchanged. Aged ministers forgot not merely the charities of religion, but the courtesies of life, and railed at each other. The Erskines, notwithstanding their advanced age, were as furious as any.

When the synod again met in April 1747, after two days of frenzied debate, an open rupture took place. The one party were called the Burghers, the other the Antiburghers, and each party claimed to be the true Associate Synod. But the Antiburghers exhibited the most daring spirit. They drew up a libel against the Burghers, and cited them to appear at their bar. When they did not appear, they treated them as contumacious, and, proceeding from censure

to censure, they at last thundered against them the greater excommunication, and thus solemnly consigned them to Satan.*

The Established clergy, ever poor, thought the times were now favourable for asking the British parliament to sanction a scheme for the augmentation of their stipends. They had rendered eminent service to the State during the recent Rebellion. They had not only remained faithful to the government themselves, but had done much to keep the people faithful; and it was therefore imagined the administration would regard favourably any reasonable request they might prefer. The subject was brought before the Assembly of 1749 by overtures from five synods and twenty-five presbyteries, and gave rise to an animated debate.

One of the ablest speakers in support of the overtures was Mr Steel, the minister of Sorn, in Ayrshire. He traced the history of the teinds and stipends of the Church. He stated that the average stipend of that time did not exceed L.52. "Can this," said he, "as living goes at present, be deemed a suitable support for a minister's family? Can this answer the necessary expense of maintenance, clothing, and education to his family as a gentleman, and at the same time defray his charges as a minister in buying books, attending judicatories, and bestowing charity? If the settlement made in our favour about one hundred and twenty years ago was only a reasonable allowance for these purposes then, it must fall vastly short of a reasonable stipend now, when the value of money is so remarkably fallen, and the price of victuals and other necessaries so universally increased. If the stipend at a medium falls so far below the necessary expense of our character and of the times we live in, what must be the case when we take off about three hundred and forty livings above L.70, L.80, L.90, and L.100, and come to the remaining six hundred ministers whose benefices do not exceed some L.60, some L.50, some L.40, some L.30 sterling —the pay of a landwaiter or the lowest excise officer?"†

Among those who opposed the overtures was the Earl of

* Struthers's History of Scotland, vol. ii.

† Morren's Annals, vol. i. pp. 116–18.

Marchmont. This earl had been the personal friend of Bolingbroke and Pope. Pope had made him one of his executors. When Lord Polwarth, he had acquired some distinction as a speaker in the House of Commons; but on his accession to his earldom he lost his seat in the Lower House, without acquiring one in the Upper; and so was obliged to transfer his eloquence to the General Assembly, where he sat as an elder. He professed himself in favour of the clergy possessing a competency, but denied that there were many livings in Scotland requiring an augmentation; and argued that those which did might have it if the incumbents sued for it before the Court of Session. "From what, then," said he, "does the necessity of this application appear? 'O!' says one gentleman, 'the times, the expense of living is altered.' Says another, 'It is necessary we should have finer clothes, make a grander appearance, in order to make us respected and enforce our doctrine.' I never knew before that show or a gaudy dress was a necessary part of a minister's character. For my part, I should look upon any of you who appeared in such dress in the same light as I would if I saw you in a procession wearing a philabeg or harlequin's coat; that is, I would consider you as madmen. I ever imagined that the main support of the Church of Scotland had been her purity and contempt of the pomp and riches so much complained of in the Church of Rome. I am sure it has been her purity and poverty that have hitherto preserved her. A member near me very well observed, that although the Church of Rome endeavoured to draw as great riches and procure as great grandeur to the clergy as any Church in the world, yet that even they thought it proper, for the preservation of the esteem of the laity, to have a begging order of men, remarkable for their piety and poverty, and who have done more for the support of that corrupt Church than all their other clergy besides."*

Such were the arguments by which this noble earl, the descendant of Covenanted ancestors, proved that the ministers of Scotland should be kept in a state of mendicancy. As the result of the discussion, the Assembly appointed a committee

* Morren's Annals, vol. i. pp. 119–29.

to consider the whole matter, and report their opinion as to what should be done.

In 1750 the committee reported that they had examined the livings connected with upwards of eight hundred parishes: that of these there was one under L.25; three above L.25 and under L.30; more than two hundred under L.50; and all, saving a very few, so poor that L.50,000 a year paid all the stipends of Scotland,—while upwards of L.60,000 worth of teinds remained unappropriated, in the hands of the landed proprietors.* They therefore recommended that application should be made to parliament for a legislative measure to facilitate processes before the Court of Teinds, and to raise the *minimum* of stipend, as fixed upwards of a hundred years ago, at eight chalders of victual to ten chalders, or their value in money. After a violent debate, in which the elders were in general arrayed against the ministers, and the ministers against the elders, the report was approved of, and a deputation was appointed to proceed to London and prosecute the business.

The whole landed proprietary were instantly in arms. The spirit which had withstood the "First Book of Discipline," and provoked John Knox's terrible wrath—which had grasped the revenues of Religious Houses under the guise of commendatorships, and the rich revenues of the bishoprics

* The following table of the stipends of the Scottish clergy was drawn up by the Committee:—

1	under	£25		
3	above	25	not higher than	£30
12		30		35
25		35		40
106		40		45
126		45		50
84		50		55
119		55		60
94		60		65
119		65		70
38		70		75
27		75		80
22		80		85
7		85		90
9		90		95
12		95		100
3		100		105
2		105		110
8		110		
16	of	138, 17s. 9⅔d.		

under a tulchan Episcopacy—which had made men, lukewarm as to religion, and scarcely respectable as to morals, flaming supporters of the Covenant, simply because Presbytery was a cheaper commodity than Prelacy—was still as strong as ever. County meetings were held, and resolutions passed condemnatory of the Augmentation Scheme. Nobles joined hands with lairds to keep their ministers poor. Heritors who rolled to church in chariots built with ecclesiastical plunder grudged the pastors who preached the gospel to them L.50 a year. The ministers attached to their writings on the subject the motto, "*Pro aris et focis;*" the proprietors attached to theirs, "*Pro focis,*" as if it were a life and death struggle for their hearths and households. It was vain to say that there were in Scotland more than a hundred stipends under L.40 a year. The ready answer was, that there were in England and Wales more than seventeen hundred benefices under L.20. It was indecent to plead that the expense of living was increased; for ministers, instead of yielding to the luxury which was corrupting the nation, should be patterns of frugality to their flocks. It was untrue to allege that the present stipends were not sufficient, for instances could be given of economical ministers laying out their yearly savings at interest.*

This was the language not of the Jacobite gentry only, but of men who were elders in the Church, who sat in her Assemblies, and made speeches about their devotion to her cause. Even the Earl of Leven, who for thirteen successive years sat as Lord High Commissioner, and was accustomed to speak his mind upon Assembly business in a way that would not now be tolerated, gave expression to his strong disapprobation of the Augmentation Scheme in the address with which he closed the Assembly. Success in such circumstances was hopeless. The Church's deputation waited upon the members of the government; they were presented to the king, and had at once the honour and humiliation of relating in such high quarters how miserably poor they were. They canvassed the leading men of the House of Commons, and circulated a paper explanatory of their case; but after

* See Morren's Annals, vol. i. Also Struthers's History, vol. ii.

some months of fruitless labour, they were obliged to abandon the project in despair.* The Scotch bishops were left to discover how they could be given to hospitality on L.40 a year, and the Scotch heritors were left in undisturbed possession of the Church's teinds.

Patronage still continued to be a bone of contention. In fact, at this period, things were in the worst possible state—there was no universally recognised rule for the appointment of ministers. The law of patronage was written in the statute-book, but it was not yet fully recognised in the courts of the Church. The call was still universally acknowledged as necessary to the pastoral tie, but there was a difference of opinion as to who were entitled to give it. There was consequently little uniformity in the way in which appointments were made. Sometimes the patron exercised his right, and sometimes he let it drop. Sometimes the people were content to take one of a list furnished them by the patron or presbytery; sometimes they refused to be so shackled, and insisted on being allowed to give a call to whomsoever they pleased. This looseness of practice, if not of law, was disastrous to the peace of the Church. Disputed settlements abounded. Between 1740 and 1750 there were upwards of fifty such cases before the supreme ecclesiastical court.† Parishes remained vacant for years, and were all the time torn by contending factions. The decisions of the Assembly were very variable. In some instances the patron was begged to withdraw his presentation, as the concurrence of the people could not be obtained; in others, the presentee was forced upon the parish in spite of its opposition; in others, a numerously signed call was preferred to a presentation backed by a call with only a few names attached to it. This variableness of decision increased

* See Appendix to Morren's Annals, vol. i.

† Morren enumerates nearly fifty cases, and I have seen some omitted by Morren. Principal Lee was asked by the Committee of the House of Commons on Patronage if he could not give a list of all the disputed settlements which had occurred in the Church. He said that a list might be made up from the papers which he had in his hands as the Clerk of Assembly, but that it would be a work of labour. Such cases are not given in the Records of the Assembly. See Patronage Report.

the evil instead of healing it, for nothing is more necessary to the peace of a community than a definite law, well understood, and uniformly acted on.

Though the parties in such disputes generally gave their reasons for preferring one man and objecting to another, evidence appears never to have been led.* The leading of evidence in such cases is a novelty, unknown to our ancient ecclesiastical law. The chief topic insisted upon in the printed papers of the parties is the comparative number of names attached to the competing calls; and it is not unfrequently represented that, of the heritors who sign, some are non-resident, some are Episcopalians, some have a blot upon their fair fame.† So simple was the process that we have some instances of plain countrymen making their appearance at the bar of the Assembly to plead their own cause, and doing so successfully, notwithstanding the jibes and browbeatings of insolent counsel.‡

* The only case I have found in which there was an approximation to leading evidence is the case of Biggar, 1752. It was alleged that the presentee could not be heard by the greater part of the congregation; and the presbytery resolved to meet in the church of Biggar, and test this. See Morren's Annals, vol. i. p. 293.

† I have before me a number of such printed papers of cases that came before the General Assembly. The following is a specimen of the manner in which they run. It is the appellant's case in the disputed settlement of Carnbee, before the Assembly in 1742:—"This is the third Assembly before whom the case of our long vacant parish has been brought; and we would fain flatter ourselves that the united interests of the heritors will at length prevail against the efforts of one or two pragmatical but active elders, whose artifices have hitherto, in a great measure, obstructed the settlement of our parish. It would take a volume minutely to represent the various steps and proceedings that have passed in this affair: we shall run over them in a word or two, and then state the case as it now stands. The patron and bulk of the heritors having applied for a moderation of a call to one Mr Nairn, while two elders craved it should be at large, and some opposed it altogether at that time, the Presbytery of St Andrews, judging it expedient, did, in January 1740, appoint a moderation at large," &c. It afterwards proceeds to analyze the votes.

‡ In 1739, Robert Halley, a weaver, and John Gray, a mason, appeared before the General Assembly as commissioners from the parish of Madderty to oppose the settlement of a Mr Blaikie, who had accepted a presentation without a call. "The two commissioners," says the "Caledonian Mercury" of the day, "though but poor labouring men, acquitted themselves to the admiration of all present by their eloquence, connection, good sense, knowledge of the constitution, forms, and discipline of the Church, advancing nothing without proper quotations. One of them being called upon by the counsel to vouch authority for

The presbyteries in all cases possessed a direct control over the appointment of ministers within their bounds; in some cases they took the whole matter into their hands. This was especially the case in remote districts, where it was thought law might be set aside with impunity. The parish of Lochbroom is situated in one of the wildest regions of Ross-shire. It was described to the Assembly as more than two hundred miles in circumference; as broken into straths, glens, mountains, and mosses; as washed by eight impetuous rivers; and as penetrated by three arms of the sea. In 1739 the minister of this desolate place prayed to be transported to the parish of Fearn. He pled that, in the discharge of his duty, he required to be perpetually travelling, like a common post; that sometimes he had to ascend places so steep that he had to creep upon his hands and feet; that he was in frequent danger of perishing, sometimes in deep snows, sometimes in rapid waters; that, furthermore, the country was infested by thieves and ruffians, who had recently carried off thirteen of his cows, delivered them at the end of his own *kirk* to another gang of freebooters, who had driven them off to Lochaber; that the same bandits had beat his servant to the effusion of his blood, and frightened his wife to the danger of her life. The presbytery, taking pity upon their brother, allowed him to depart from this dismal abode.*

a certain assertion, his back got up with so holy an indignation at being interrupted, that he gave such a repartee as must have ruffled the patience of any other than the learned gentleman." This was by no means a solitary case. In 1740, in the case of Bowden, "there appeared Walter Heatley, the miller of Bowden's man, commissioner for the Christian people, who appealed to the "Book of Discipline," which he held in his hand, and insisted that nothing should be determined contrary thereto or to the Scriptures of truth." The miller of Bowden's man, however, was told by the counsel, that to speak of the people electing a minister, now that patronage was the law of the land, was like what happened in England, where the dean and chapter met to pray for light and direction in their election of a bishop, though they knew by the *Congé d'élire* they were precluded from electing any but the person there named, under the penalty of a *premunire*.

* Case of the Transportation of the Rev. Mr Donald Ross from the parish of Lochbroom, in the Presbytery of Gairloch and Synod of Glenelg, to be minister in the parish of Fearn, in the Presbytery of Tayne, in the Synod of Ross. To be heard at the bar of the venerable Assembly upon —— day of May 1742. Edinburgh, 12th May 1742.

The Earl of Cromarty was patron; but the six months allowed him by law elapsed, and he failed to present. The presbytery, accordingly, in the month of December, appointed one of their number "to take the first opportunity the season and condition of the weather would allow him, for travelling through the desert mountains he had to pass, to preach at the church of Lochbroom, and then to intimate to the parishioners his intention to moderate in a call to one to be minister." On the first Sabbath of January the minister so appointed managed to reach Lochbroom, and intimated that on the following Wednesday the presbytery would meet to moderate in a call. They did meet, and the greatest unanimity prevailed. Never before, since the Revolution, had such a form been attended to—the presbytery had done everything upon their own authority, so Episcopalian was the place, and the presbyters were now congratulating themselves that the Episcopal mountaineers were putting their names to a call to a Presbyterian minister. But weeks after all was over, there was an ominous letter from the Earl of Cromarty put into the presbytery's hands, complaining that he had not received due notice of what was to be done; that their letter, though dated the 15th of December, had not reached him till the 12th of January; and alleging that they had surreptitiously kept it up till it was too late to be of use. The case went before the Assembly; and, whether rightly or wrongly, the settlement was annulled.*

The Presbytery of Skye consists of members living on different islands, separated by stormy seas, and accordingly seldom meets. In 1745 the parish of South Uist was vacant, and a Crown presentation was issued; but the presbytery was not to meet till the *jus devolutum* was on the point of taking place, and where they were to meet the presentee could not discover, for the crafty Hebrideans had kept their place of rendezvous concealed; and it might be in any one of their misty Cyclades. Thus they managed to give the presentee the slip; and, having done so, they appointed to

* Case of the Presbytery of Gairloch and the Callers of the Rev. Mr Roderick M'Kenzie to be minister of the parish of Lochbroom. See also Morren's Annals, vol. i.

the vacant parish the son of Mr Macaulay, one of themselves. The General Assembly, however, considered the trick as disreputable, and ordered the presbytery to take the Crown presentee on trial; but the men of the mist, in the exercise of their wisdom, pronounced him unqualified, and so in the end effected their purpose.*

In 1746 the Presbytery of Forfar gave both a presentation and a call to a Mr Brown to be minister of Cortachy, on the ground that the people were disaffected to the government, and unfit to be intrusted with the choice of a minister; and the Assembly approved of what they had done.†

In truth, at no period in the history of the Church was there greater uncertainty or greater contrarieties of practice and opinion in regard to the settlement of parishes. Between 1712 and 1730 patronage was seldom exercised; and when it was exercised, it was never enforced unless the presentee was agreeable to the parish. The call was the practice, if it was not the law, of the Church. From 1730 to 1750 patrons began more frequently to exercise their right, and the Church began to show a disposition to recognise it. Still patronage was uniformly spoken of as a grievance; the Commission was yearly instructed to use its best efforts to have it removed; and the people in general were little disposed to bow their necks to its yoke. This was the feeling not merely of the lower orders of the populace, but of men of property and rank, who were perhaps compelled to accept a minister from some patron who be-

* Principal Lee, Patronage Report, quest. 3041, 3042. Morren's Annals, vol. i. p. 91. "This is not the only time," says Morren, "that the Presbytery of Uist has grasped at the *jus devolutum*. The late Mr Macgilivray of Kilmalie used to tell an amusing story of his repairing in all haste, and in the depth of winter, to a meeting of that presbytery, to lodge with them a presentation he had received to the parish of Barra, when the six months were on the point of expiring. He did not succeed in reaching the island till the afternoon, when, as he was hurrying on, he met some persons on horseback, to whom he put a question as to the presbytery meeting. One of their number replied, '*We* are the presbytery; and if you are, as we suppose, a presentee to Barra, you are too late; for (pointing to one of the cavalcade) we have just appointed this gentleman.'"

† Morren's Annals, vol. i. p. 88.

longed to a hostile Church, and had not an acre of land in the parish. The presentation and the call were evidently destined to come into collision. The old ideas founded upon the Books of Discipline and the Acts of 1649 and 1690 were not yet effaced; the new rule founded upon the Act of 1712 was daily gaining strength. A struggle was inevitable.

The disputes to which we have referred had, with a very few exceptions, been confined to the ecclesiastical courts. But the case of Lanark, which occurred at this time, went from the Assembly to the Court of Session, and from the Court of Session to the House of Lords; and, by the discussions it provoked and the decisions to which it led, threw a new light upon the law of patronage. The patronage of Lanark was claimed by Lockhart of Lee, by Lockhart of Carnwath, by the magistrates of the burgh, and by the Crown. Lockhart of Lee presented a Mr Dick; the burgh and the Crown concurred in presenting a Mr Gray. The presbytery found from their records that the family of Lee had been infeft in the patronage in 1647, and had drawn the stipend during a vacancy; and therefore, not doubting their title, gave effect to their presentation, by sustaining a call in favour of Mr Dick. But the Lockharts were disliked in Lanark; the magistrates were incensed at having their claim set aside; the feeling against patronage was strong; and when the presbytery attempted to complete the settlement, they were mobbed, refused admission to the church, and told that the people would resist unto blood. Two of the bailies of the royal burgh, together with three women and seven men, were afterwards tried for the riot; and though the bailies escaped, three of their male and three of their female associates were either imprisoned or banished. The presbytery, unable from the excited state of the populace to ordain Mr Dick in the parish church of Lanark, did so in the Tron Church of Glasgow.

Meantime the Crown contested the right of presentation, and got a judgment of the Court of Session in its favour. What was to be done? Mr Dick had been regularly ordained minister of Lanark; was his ordination to be held invalid on

account of this decision of the civil courts? The Barons of Exchequer claimed the stipend, as patrons were then entitled to the stipends of their parishes during the time they were vacant. There was an appeal to the law. The Court of Session found that the minister who had been inducted by the presbytery had a right to the fruits of the benefice; but an appeal was taken to the House of Lords, and Lord Chancellor Hardwicke reversed the judgment of the Court of Session, and found that the Crown was entitled to lift the stipend of the parish as if it were vacant.* Mr Dick was not challenged as minister of the parish, but he was found to have no right to the benefice; and such is the law still, though, by an act of parliament passed in the reign of George III., the Widows' Fund is now entitled to all stipends which fall due during a vacancy. In consequence of this decision, Mr Dick did not receive a farthing during the four years he remained in Lanark; but he was then translated to Edinburgh, where his argumentative eloquence, his dignity of character, and his capacity for business, raised him to one of the most prominent positions in the Church. Both Sir Henry Moncreiff and Dugald Stewart bear testimony to the high estimation in which he was held.† But this case showed, on the one hand, how violent was the antipathy of the people to patronage, when the merits of such a presentee could not overcome it; and, on the other, how dangerous it was to induct a minister without a valid presentation.

The Church was divided then, as it is still, into two parties, who began to be distinguished by the names by which they have ever since been known—the Moderate party and the Popular party. Both agreed in regarding patronage as a grievance, and the call as necessary to the formation of the bond between the pastor and his parish; but the former did not attach the most weight to the call which was subscribed by the most names, whereas the latter

* A full account of this case will be found in the first volume of Morren's Annals. Some able strictures upon it are given by Sir Henry Moncreiff in his Appendix to his Life of Erskine.

† See Moncreiff's Life of Dr Erskine, and Dugald Stewart's Life of Principal Robertson.

did. The former received the countenance of the government; the latter were obliged to content themselves with the plaudits of the people. Dr Alexander Webster, of whom we have already spoken, was the leader of the Popular party; Dr Patrick Cumming, Professor of Church History in the University of Edinburgh, was the leader of the Moderates. Both were possessed of conversational powers of the highest order, and of a vein of pleasantry which made them favourites in every society. Dr Cumming was distinguished as a preacher by an easy and fluent style; as a professor by an extensive and critical knowledge of the subjects upon which he prelected. His capacity for business was acknowledged by his enemies; but his powers of debate do not seem to have been pre-eminent, and a large part of his influence in the Church resulted from the support which he received from the Earl of Islay, afterwards the Duke of Argyle, who then had the chief management of Scotch affairs, and had the government patronage—that mighty mould of opinions—almost entirely at his disposal.

It frequently happened that when the Assembly—in which the Moderate party were now fast gaining ground—ordered a presentee to be settled in spite of the remonstrances of the parishioners, the presbytery where the parish lay refused to do the disagreeable work of inducting or ordaining him. They declared their consciences would not allow them to do it. They declared that their own congregations would forsake them if they did. They would not lay the foundation of a Secession meeting-house at their own door with their own hands. In such a strait as this, the Assembly had hitherto appointed a special committee to correspond with the presbytery and act in its stead; but this was felt to be an anomalous procedure, and some of the more uncompromising among the Moderates resolved to discontinue it. It was right that every presbytery should do its own work, and do it every presbytery must. These antagonistic principles were now on the eve of a collision, and it was plain that the one or the other must bow down and lick the dust.

A Mr Watson had been presented to Torphichen, and out

of the thousand adults who formed the congregation, only five or six could be induced to sign his call. Twice had the Assembly ordered the Presbytery of Linlithgow to proceed with his settlement, and twice had the presbytery refused. The matter came up to the Assembly of 1751, when the two hostile parties mustered their strength and prepared to do battle. The Moderates urged that to permit disobedience to pass unpunished was inconsistent with the nature and first principles of society. When men are considered as individuals, said they, we acknowledge that they have no guide but their own understanding, and no judge but their own conscience; but when joined in society, the right of private judgment is superseded, the conscience of the individual is merged in that of the community, and the minority must yield to the dictates of the majority. These maxims form the basis of Presbyterian church-government. The two capital articles by which Presbytery is distinguished from every other ecclesiastical polity are—the parity of its ministers, and the subordination of its courts. By the one, individual ministers are prevented from exercising lordship over their brethren; by the other, confusion and anarchy are prevented. Wherever there is a subordination of courts, one must be supreme; and though it be not infallible, yet its sentences must be absolute and final. No inferior court may disobey its mandates with impunity, or all government is at an end; no individual may set up his own scruples against the decisions of the whole Church, or authority sinks into contempt. Accordingly, every minister is required at his ordination to vow that he will submit himself to the discipline and government of the Church. Submit himself, therefore, he must; or if he cannot, there is but one remedy—he must withdraw himself from its communion.*

The Popular party argued, that this was to introduce a

* I have here abridged and condensed the argument contained in the "Reasons of Dissent from the judgment and resolution of the Commission, March 11, 1752, resolving to inflict no censure on the Presbytery of Dunfermline for their disobedience in relation to the settlement of Inverkeithing." This able paper bears the strong stamp of Robertson's style, and has always been considered as the most perfect development of the principles of the Moderate party.

despotism into the Church—to subject the servants of God to the rigours of military law. They did not deny the necessary subordination of the ecclesiastical courts; but so long as the General Assembly was fallible, they demurred to its sentences being absolutely binding. The Church of Scotland, said they, is but a branch of the Church of Christ, and within it the law of Christ must be paramount. God alone is Lord of the conscience. He who sins against his conscience sins against his God; and no order of a superior court can make good evil, or evil good. No man, no Christian, can resign the right of judging for himself. Is the General Assembly, they continued, resolved to compel presbyteries to execute its sentences at all hazards? is conscience to be stifled? is the strong conviction of duty to be disregarded? is everything that is sacred to be sacrificed to the single principle of submission to authority? What will be the result of such compulsory measures? The honest and the brave will be compelled to seek for liberty of conscience without the pale of the Establishment; the unprincipled and the cowardly may remain, but they will remain with consciences debauched by this high stretch of Church authority—by being compelled to do what their hearts tell them they ought not to do. We plead not for license to every man to do as he pleases; but we plead that we may not be bound hand and foot by a crushing despotism; that the law may relax something of its sternness in cases where conscience is concerned. And if any such cases there are, is not this one? We cannot bring ourselves to force an obnoxious pastor upon a reluctant people. We know that the good of the Church forbids us to do so. The whole district where we live and labour is already incensed; and if we do this thing, we throw a burning torch into the midst of the temple, and the whole building will soon be in a flame. Are there not enough of Secession churches already, that we should build more? And, after all, what necessity is there for thus concussing us to a conduct contradictory to our principles? Did not the moderation of the Church devise a remedy? has not the Assembly itself been in the habit of executing its own sentences? has not a committee of men

willing to do this work saved the unwilling from violating their convictions of duty? and why now lay upon us a yoke which our fathers were unable to bear?*

At this period, it was very unusual for a young man to address the Assembly, unless he were specially asked to do so by the Moderator. But the Presbytery of Haddington had sent up two commissioners to this Assembly who were resolved to break through this rule, and make themselves be heard.† In the course of the debate one of these rose up and moved, that the recusant presbyters should be suspended, as the punishment of their contumacy. His countenance was frank and open, and his speech, though not very argumentative, was delivered in an easy, gentlemanlike way. It was John Home of Athelstaneford, afterwards known over the wide world as the author of the magnificent tragedy of "Douglas." His friend rose up to second the motion, and at once caught the ear of the Assembly. His argument was so lucid, his sentences were so finely balanced, his principles so broad and so fitly applied, that though he had never spoken in the Assembly before, he at once, by the splendour of his eloquence, eclipsed its greatest orators. It was WILLIAM ROBERTSON, minister of Gladsmuir, destined afterwards to become the Principal of the University of Edinburgh, the acknowledged leader of the Moderate party in the Church, and to acquire undying renown by his historical works. Only eleven voted for their motion; but what had been said was not forgotten. By a large majority, however, the Assembly agreed to censure the contumacious presbytery, and they did so in the face of a "dissent," subscribed by some of the leading men in the Church.‡ Even this was

* I have here condensed the argument given in a speech at the bar of the Assembly in 1751 in the Torphichen case (see Scots Magazine, March 1752; and Morren's Annals, vol. i. p. 200); in the Reasons of Dissent in the Torphichen case, subscribed by Principal Wishart and others; and in the "Answers to the Reasons of Dissent from the Sentence of the Commission in the Case of Inverkeithing, March 11, 1752, drawn up by the Committee appointed for that purpose." This paper was understood to be the composition of Dr Webster; but its loose argumentation and disjointed sentences form a sad contrast to the well-compacted composition of Robertson.

† Dugald Stewart's Life and Writings of Principal Robertson.

‡ Morren's Annals, vol. i. Stewart's Life and Writings of Robertson. A

thought at the time a severe sentence. The obnoxious presentee was afterwards inducted by a "riding committee"—the last that was ever appointed—and it is curious to find upon it the names of William Robertson, John Home, and Hugh Blair.

The battle was begun, but the issue was still doubtful. It was not long till another disputed settlement gave occasion for another trial of strength. A Mr Richardson had been presented to the parish of Inverkeithing; but as the great body of the people were violently opposed to him, the Presbytery of Dunfermline delayed proceeding to his induction. This state of affairs was brought before the Commission of Assembly which met in November 1751, and the presbytery was ordered to proceed to the induction without farther delay, under pain of a "very high censure" in case of disobedience. When the Commission again met in March 1752, the patron complained that still his presentee had not been inducted. "Shall we censure the presbytery for their stubborn disobedience?" was keenly debated; but it carried "No" by a small majority. The Popular party had its triumph, but it was only temporary. The minister of Gladsmuir and his friends dissented; they drew up their reasons of dissent in an elaborate document which bears the strong impress of the historian of Charles V., and which may be regarded as the exposition of the opinions of the Moderate party;* and so the case was kept open for the final adjudication of the General Assembly.

As usual, the Assembly met in May. It was known that the Inverkeithing Case was to show which party were henceforward to be dominant in the Church. The first vote taken might have caused a suspicion as to how matters were to go. Dr Patrick Cumming, the acknowledged leader of the Moderates, was raised to the Moderator's chair, though he had occupied that dignity only three years before. The Lord High Commissioner, the Earl of Leven, did not conceal his sentiments. In his speech from the throne he told the

very full account of the Torphichen Case is given in the Appendix to the Patronage Report.

* A copy of this celebrated paper will be found in Morren's Annals, vol. i.

Assembly, "The main intention of your meeting is frustrated if your judgments and decisions are not held to be final; if inferior courts continue to assume that liberty they have taken upon themselves, in too many instances, of disputing and disobeying the decisions of their superiors." The case of Inverkeithing came on; the persuasive eloquence of Robertson was again heard; and the Commission was found to have exceeded its powers, and not to have done what it ought to have done. It was then moved that the Presbytery of Dunfermline should be appointed to meet at Inverkeithing on the approaching Thursday; that all the members should be ordered to attend; that five at least should be a *quorum;* and that each of them should be bound to appear at the bar of the Assembly on the Friday following, and give an account of his conduct. This was carried by a large majority.*

It was now very evident that the Assembly meant to carry things with a high hand, and that disobedience would no longer pass with impunity. Thursday came round. Three members of the Presbytery of Dunfermline met in the church of Inverkeithing, and waited there from twelve till two o'clock, but none of their brethren appeared. Two had been in the town in the morning, endeavouring to persuade the people to relax in their opposition, that so the presbytery might be relieved from its dilemma; but the people would not yield, and they reluctantly turned their footsteps homewards. In ordinary circumstances, the three might have proceeded with the induction; but the Assembly, by an unnecessary stretch of authority, had raised the usual *quorum* to five, thus precluding them from acting and bringing this painful business to a close.

On Friday the members of the recusant presbytery stood at the bar of the Assembly. Those who had met said so; those who had been at Inverkeithing in the morning mentioned this to show that they were willing to go as far as conscience would allow. Six of the most resolute of them gave in an "Humble Representation," in which they vindicated their conduct. They reminded the Assembly that the

* Morren's Annals, vol. i. p. 263.

law of patronage had always been regarded by the Church as a grievance, and as contrary to the Union settlement. They quoted the Act of 1736, forbidding presbyteries to intrude ministers upon parishes contrary to the will of the people. They declared that they were brought into the unhappy dilemma of either disobeying their ecclesiastical superiors, or of contributing to the overthrow of the recognised principles and truest interests of the Church. The reading of this document was followed by a discussion, which ended in the Assembly resolving, by a majority of ninety-three to sixty-five, to depose one of the recusant presbyters. This was one day's work.*

Next day the mutinous ecclesiastics were called in, one by one, and asked if they had anything farther to offer in their defence. The others said little or nothing; but Thomas Gillespie, minister of Carnock, read another "Humble Representation," in which he referred to some members of Assembly who had thought that the accused had aggravated their offence by representing patronage as a grievance in the Church, and as contrary to the Articles of Union; and quoted from the Records of the Assembly as authority for what had been said. The paper was not received.

The Assembly had resolved that one of the mutineers should be deposed; but still the delicate question remained—Which of the six should be singled out as the victim to bear the sins of the whole? In this ecclesiastical ostracism, fifty-two votes concentred upon Gillespie; not more than one was given against any other of the delinquents. One hundred and two members declined giving any vote in a question so painful.†

The lot had fallen upon Gillespie, and he was deposed. The spirit in which he received his sentence must make us respect him. "Moderator," said he, "I desire to receive this sentence of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland pronounced against me with real concern, and

* Acts of the Assembly, pp. 707–9. Morren's Annals, vol. i. p. 267. Appendix to Patronage Report.

† Acts of the Assembly, pp. 709, 710. Morren's Annals, vol. i. pp. 268, 269.

awful impressions of the Divine conduct in it; but I rejoice that to me it is given, in behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake." It is not quite clear why the Assembly should have singled out for sacrifice a man so upright, so conscientious, so inoffensive as Gillespie certainly was. He had never taken a prominent part in ecclesiastical affairs, and his conduct at this testing time shows that bitterness was not in him. Perhaps the reading of the second representation was the cause; for though that representation is expressed in language quite respectful to the Assembly, yet it alluded to topics which some members did not like to hear, and perhaps might be construed into something like taking the last word of scolding. The minute of the Assembly bears that he was deposed for "repeated acts of disobedience, adhered to tenaciously when at the bar."

But there were other circumstances which probably conspired with this. Gillespie, when a student of divinity, had gone to Perth to hear the lectures of the professor appointed by the Secession Church. Ten days were enough to disgust him, and he left an atmosphere so close that no free-thinking man could breathe it and live. Still he had been there. He afterwards went to England, joined a body of Dissenters, and received ordination from the celebrated Dr Doddridge. It is singular that when he received the presentation to Carnock, no obstacle was thrown in his way from this circumstance. He was, in fact, an example of a Dissenter readily received into the bosom of the Church. It is still more remarkable, that when he signed the Confession of Faith and Formula, he did so with an explanation regarding the power of the civil magistrate.* It is not improbable that many of the members of the Assembly may have said it was fitting that this troubler of their Zion should be sent back whence he came. He was not of them, though he was with them. He was an alien at best. If a case of the same kind were occurring in the present day, it is probable less sympathy would be exhibited for a Dissenter received into the Church than for a man who had been born and bred in

* Life of Gillespie, in Lives of United Presbyterian Fathers. Morren's Annals, vol. i. p. 276.

it. It must be remembered that no very strong reason is necessary to account for his being marked out as the sufferer. Six men had committed the same crime, and were in the same condemnation, and it was necessary that one should be chosen. When the balance is *in equilibrio* a single grain of dust will turn it.

But what was the cause of the sudden change in the Church's policy. Ministers had never been deposed for refusing to induct obnoxious presentees before; why should they now? Only eleven men in the Assembly of 1751 voted for suspending the mutineers of Linlithgow; how came it that a large majority of the Assembly of 1752 voted for deposing one of the mutineers of Dunfermline? The explanation of the fact does not lie very deep. There had for many years been a growing tendency to give effect to the law of patronage. Recent circumstances had confirmed this tendency. The cases of Culross and Lanark had opened the eyes of churchmen to the awkward fact, that if a minister were inducted into a parish without a valid presentation, he could not claim the stipend, and must starve.* A series of such cases, it was seen, would effectually disestablish the Church.

But still further, when but a year ago the Church asked the parliament to do something to relieve its poverty, a paper was put in circulation among the members of the legislature, telling how the Act of Queen Anne touching patronage was disregarded, and how many of the Scotch ministers held their livings in defiance of the law; and this was known to have prejudiced many of the English Commoners against the Augmentation Scheme.† This reproach

* The case of Lanark was not finally decided in the House of Lords till 1753; but the case of Culross, and the ground taken by the Crown in the case of Lanark, must have had a strong influence on the minds of churchmen.

† In this paper it is said—"It appears that the presbyteries of Scotland pay very little or no regard to this law (10 Anne, cap. 12); and that, in direct disobedience to it, they frequently refuse to enter the patron's presentee; and, for the most part, moderate the call of another person named to them by the Christian people, as they are called—the heritors or the elders. It is therefore submitted that a great part of the persons who now apply to parliament for relief with respect to their stipends became entitled to them by a breach and

must be wiped away; the law must be obeyed; the rights of patrons respected; and presbyteries compelled to carry out the sentences of the superior courts. In the case of Torphichen, the screw was first applied. The presbytery was censured; but the punishment was found not to be sufficiently severe. It had not intimidated others into subjection. A heavier punishment must be inflicted, if the authority of the Assembly was to be maintained. The case of Inverkeithing occurred, and Gillespie was deposed. It is probable that the older men, accustomed from their youth to obstreperous presbyteries and riding commissions, would have shrunk from such a decisive step. But young men had sprung up with strong wills, decided opinions, and abilities sufficient to make themselves be heard and respected. It is not too much to say that William Robertson, Hugh Blair, and John Home were the master-spirits in the movement. Dr Cumming, whose days were now numbered, as leader of the Moderates, in closing the Assembly, thought himself bound to make some apology for the youth of the men who had influenced its measures—it was young men, said he, in defence of our old constitution.*

Though it is perfectly certain that the Presbyterian government implies subordination of the presbytery to the General Assembly, and of every individual member to the whole Church, it is impossible to resist the feeling that Gillespie was hardly dealt with. His only crime was absence from a presbytery, met for a purpose of which he disapproved; and the induction of Richardson might have been effected without him, had the Assembly not arbitrarily raised the *quorum* from three to five. It was known that there were three men in the presbytery willing to brave the popular indignation by inducting the presentee; it was all that the law required, and why should the Assembly require more? There was no need of wounding consciences unnecessarily. It looks

in opposition to a law made by the parliament of Great Britain, that in case the wisdom of parliament shall incline to indulge the clergy with any alleviation of the law as to these matters, they will, at the same time, make effectual provisions for enforcing a due obedience to the Act of the 10th of Queen Anne."

* Morren's Annals, vol. i.

as if the Moderate party had been resolved, not merely to effect this settlement, but to crush the party opposed to them. They accomplished their end; they achieved a decisive victory; but it was at the expense of a second schism in the Church. Gillespie, as we shall afterwards see, became the father and founder of the Presbytery of Relief.

Some of the Seceders remained in the Church for years after they were deposed. Gillespie at once abandoned his church, his manse, his stipend. During the summer and autumn following his deposition he preached in the fields. In his very first sermon, instead of heaping calumnies upon the Church as the Seceders had, and as might have been expected in his circumstances, he told his hearers that, though he had been deposed for not doing what he believed it would have been sinful in him to have done, yet he hoped no public disputes should ever be the burden of his preaching, as he knew that *the wrath of man worked not the righteousness of God.* When winter approached he retired to a meeting-house provided for him in Dunfermline.* All this was Christian-like and good.

In the month of June a sufficient number of the Presbytery of Dunfermline were got together to induct Richardson; but three, who were still resolute in their disobedience, were suspended from their judicial functions, and continued under this sentence for thirteen years.

The summary deposition of Gillespie led to much discussion throughout the Church. Some declared that presbyteries were now subjected to a tyranny too heavy to be borne; others said that the law had simply been vindicated, and the transgression of it punished. These opposite feelings entered into sermons; they even mingled with prayers. Synods and presbyteries took up the matter, and arrived at various conclusions. The Synod of Glasgow and Ayr ranged itself on the liberal side; the Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale declared itself for law and order, come what might.† It was hoped by many that the As-

* Morren's Annals, vol. i. pp. 275, 276. Life of Gillespie in United Presbyterian Fathers.

† Morren's Annals, vol. ii. pp. 1–8.

sembly of 1753 would restore Gillespie. It was thought that enough had been done to magnify the authority of the supreme court, and that mercy might now follow in the footsteps of judgment; the people of Carnock petitioned for his restoration. The Presbytery of Dunfermline petitioned for it. By the narrow majority of three the Assembly refused their prayer.* It is evident that Gillespie had himself been looking forward to restoration; but disappointed in his hopes, he now reluctantly formed a kirk-session, and began to administer the sacraments to those who adhered to him. Baffled and beat in the courts of the Church, the Popular party sought their revenge in the Press. Early in 1753, Witherspoon published his "Ecclesiastical Characteristics, or the Arcana of Church Policy," in which he described, with a keen and delicate irony, almost worthy of Pascal, the progress of Moderatism.

David Hume had now been long known to the metaphysical and literary world. So far back as 1738 he had published his celebrated "Treatise of Human Nature," in which, following out the speculations of Locke and Berkeley to their legitimate conclusion, he had shown that man has no knowledge, and can have no knowledge, of anything beyond his own ideas and impressions. He was only twenty-five years of age at the time; but his speculations were so bold and original as at once to place him in the foremost rank of philosophers. Both Kant and Reid acknowledged that they were first roused from their dogmatism by the scepticism of Hume. He afterwards, at different dates, published his "Essays, Moral and Political," and his "Inquiry Concerning the Human Understanding," in which some of the crudities of his juvenile composition are corrected, and his system of scepticism is more fully developed. Some of his Essays are among the most perfect in our language, whether we consider the simple beauty of their diction, or the fine philosophic truths they contain. But, unhappily, in some of his speculations he has entered, not with unsandaled foot, the sacred domain of morals and religion, and left untouched very little which we can either

* Morren's Annals, vol. i. pp. 277, 278.

piously believe or virtuously do. In his "Natural History of Religion," he more than insinuates doubts as to the solidity of the foundations upon which natural theology is built; and in his "Essay on Miracles," borrowing his weapons from the armoury of the Church, appropriating to his use the argument of Tillotson upon transubstantiation, he attempts to demonstrate the startling proposition, that "no testimony is sufficient to establish a miracle, unless the testimony be of such a kind that its falsehood would be more miraculous than the fact which it endeavours to establish."

Yet, with all his philosophical scepticism, Hume was a man of exemplary morals, of genuine benevolence, and of an almost childlike simplicity and guilelessness of disposition. He never intruded his peculiar opinions upon general society, so that even clergymen could mingle in the same society with him, and often did so, without hearing a word to wound their feelings or dishonour their faith. "He had, it might be said, in the language which the Grecian historian applies to an illustrious Roman, two minds: one which indulged in the metaphysical scepticism which his genius could invent, but which it could not always disentangle; another, simple, natural, and playful, which made his conversation delightful to his friends, and even frequently conciliated men whose principles of belief his philosophical doubts, if they had not power to shake, had grieved and offended."*

Contemporary with Mr Hume was Henry Home, Lord Kames. Possessed of great activity of mind and versatility of genius, this accomplished man relieved the drudgery of his professional toil by the study of metaphysics, and in 1751 published his "Essays on the Principles of Morality and Natural Religion." Unlike Mr Hume, Lord Kames was no unbeliever; he was an elder in the Church; and one of the topics insisted upon in his Essays is the existence of the innate ideas of right and wrong. He was, however, a free-thinking man, and had upon some points expressed himself in such a way as to make some religionists believe that, under the profession of Christianity, he concealed a baleful

* Henry Mackenzie's Life of John Home, p. 21.

infidelity. He had especially given offence by declaring that the existence of an all-pervading Deity was inconsistent with liberty of action in man; and that the liberty which every man fancies himself to possess was a delusion kindly implanted in his bosom by nature, as necessary to the existence of virtue.

There lived at this time a Mr George Anderson, who held the post of Chaplain in Watson's Hospital at Edinburgh. He had no great acuteness, but he possessed vigour of mind, and was of an irascible and pugnacious disposition. At the age of eighty, when most polemics would be putting off their armour, he was putting his on, to run a tilt with Henry Home of Kames. In a pamphlet, entitled an "Estimate of the Profit and Loss of Religion, personally and publicly stated," he impugned the Essays as opposed to both religion and morals. This called public attention to the subject. The first stroke was struck. In May 1755 an anonymous pamphlet appeared, addressed to the members of the General Assembly, then sitting. It professed to be an analysis of the writings of Henry Home and David Hume; it gave a list of propositions alleged to be taught by them, and proved this by passages extracted from their works.* The Assembly, thus called to consider the matter, passed an act, expressing deep concern at the prevalence of infidelity and immorality, and enjoining ministers carefully to guard their flocks against their contagion.† In all this the Church did wisely and well.

But the matter was not at an end. A few days after the Assembly rose, there appeared a pamphlet, entitled "Observations on the Analysis of the Moral and Religious Sentiments," &c., which was generally attributed to Dr Hugh Blair, then at the height of his popularity as a preacher. Just a year before this he had been brought to fill the pulpit of Lady Yester's, and was fascinating fashionable audiences by sermons which still remain to us, and which are certainly elegant in their didactic structure; but which have neither the fancy of Taylor, the fervour of Chalmers, nor the stately march of Robert Hall. He was the personal friend of both

* Morren's Annals, vo . ii. pp. 54–58. † Acts of Assembly, p. 721.

Hume and Home; and no doubt it was his friendship that made him come to their rescue at the risk of suffering in his own reputation. He reprobates any attempt to restrain the freedom of inquiry; he defends Lord Kames, by alleging that the quotations from his works were unfairly given; and, while he allows that Mr Hume had taught many things inconsistent with sound doctrine, he remarks that there was therefore the less need to ascribe to him other opinions which he did not hold.

This pamphlet was followed by others; and when the Assembly again met in 1756, the subject was resumed. Some members of the House thought that the general censure of infidelity was not enough; that the cause of truth and piety required a special censure, in which the infidels should be openly named, held up to abhorrence, and anathamatized. There was a disposition to say nothing about Lord Kames, probably from the respect felt for the judicial bench; but it was thought that regarding David Hume there need be no such delicacy. The matter was brought before the Committee of Overtures. It was proposed that a committee should be appointed to investigate his writings, to call him before them, and to ripen matters for a report to next Assembly. But there were many who thought that this would answer no good purpose. It was urged that it was vain to think that the censures of the Church would convince him of his errors, or lead him to retract them. It was argued, that if the subjects in debate were once opened up, they would lead to discussions regarding the highest problems in metaphysics and morals, of which it was impossible to see the end; and that such discussions, of which the history of the Church afforded many examples, had only marred the comfort and shaken the convictions of the faithful. It was said that anything like persecution—anything like an attempt to revive the Inquisition, or to establish an "Index Expurgatorius"—would only make Mr Hume's writings more widely known and more greedily read than they were. Last of all it was maintained, that Mr Hume was not within the Church, and that therefore he was not a proper subject of its discipline. These arguments prevailed; the matter never

got beyond the committee; and Hume was saved from the excommunication which was threatened.*

The conduct of the Church ever since appears to be the best vindication of this Assembly. There have been infidels since the days of Hume; but the Church has never thought it meet to summon them to its bar, or to pronounce upon them its anathemas. There are infidels now, but no one would urge such a course. It is wiser to encounter infidelity with arguments, than to attempt to overawe it with authority. Happily the Church at the very time we speak of had men within its pale no mean antagonists even for Hume. In the quiet parish of New Machar, Thomas Reid was cultivating that metaphysical genius which was afterwards to assail the universal scepticism of Hume, and to bring back philosophy from her wanderings, and join her in wedlock to common-sense. And not far away, in Banchory-Ternan, by the banks of the Dee, George Campbell was preparing himself for unravelling the subtle sophistry of the "Essay on Miracles," and vindicating the evidence of the Christian religion.

Though Lord Kames escaped the criticism of the Assembly, his old assailant, George Anderson, brought his treatise before the Presbytery of Edinburgh; and having done so, he died. The complaint was nominally against the publishers, as the book was anonymous; but Kames was not a little annoyed at being virtually arraigned for heresy, and charged with opinions which he strenuously declared that he did not hold. More instructed in law and philosophy than divinity, he was greatly relieved, however, by learning for the first time that Augustine, Calvin, and Pictet held opinions regarding human necessity akin to his own; and afterwards defended himself by the authority of Jonathan Edwards, whose celebrated "Treatise on the Freedom of the Will" had been recently published. The presbytery dismissed the complaint; and Lord Kames afterwards exhibited his candour by publicly retracting some of his errors.†

* Morren's Annals, vol. ii. pp. 86–92.

† Morren's Annals, vol. ii. pp. 92–8. Moncreiff's Life of Dr Erskine, Appendix.

But the Church now required to turn from the quiet groves of Academos to the glare and uproar of the theatre. John Home had composed his tragedy of "Douglas." He had travelled on horseback, with his play in his saddle-bag, all the long way to London, to ask Garrick to bring it out at Drury Lane; but Garrick chagrined the young poet by declaring it was altogether unfit for representation on the stage. Home's friends, who had formed an exalted opinion of the production, recommended him to try it in the humble abode of the Tragic Muse, in the Canongate of Edinburgh. Arrangements were accordingly made with the managers; and the lovers of theatricals were informed that, on the 14th of December 1756, the tragedy of "Douglas" would be performed. The town was in a state of high excitement, curious to hear what kind of drama could be written by a Scotchman, and by a minister of the Established Church.* Expectation was increased by snatches of the piece which were repeated by friends of the author at literary tea-parties. There were whispers among the initiated few of how, at a private rehearsal, the parts had been taken by the most celebrated men of the day; of how Robertson, the future historian, had acted Lord Randolph; David Hume, Glenalvon; Dr Carlyle, Old Norval; John Home, Douglas; Dr Adam Ferguson, Lady Randolph; and Hugh Blair, Anna, the maid: and how Lord Elibank, Lord Milton, Lord Kames, and Lord Monboddo had acted the audience, and given their applause.†

The night came, and the theatre was crowded with expectant citizens. Among the audience were observed several clergymen, who had been led there partly by curiosity, partly to give their plaudits to the play, and partly by a chivalrous desire to share with Home the odium of being connected with the stage. Some of them skulked in corners; but prominent in one of the side-boxes was seen Dr Carlyle

* Mackenzie's Life of Home.

† Mackenzie does not mention this circumstance, which makes it doubtful. It was stated in the "Edinburgh Weekly Chronicle," January 21, 1829, and is quoted by Chambers, in his Lives of Illustrious Scotsmen. The thing is not at all unlikely; but it is probable it was nothing more than what would now be called "a reading."

of Inveresk, with his powerful frame and noble head, so like to the head which the Latin sculptors delighted to give to their Jupiter Tonans. A man beside him, under the influence of drink, ventured to be noisy and rude, and the divine did not hesitate to turn him out. The play proceeded; the applause became enthusiastic; and at the more tender passages the audience was drowned in tears. "The town," says Dr Carlyle (and "I can vouch how truly," says Henry Mackenzie), "was in an uproar of exultation that a Scotsman should write a tragedy of the first rate, and that its merits were first submitted to them."*

But this exultation was not unmingled with other feelings. Many good men were scandalized that a minister should write a play, and that ministers should be present at its performance. On the 5th of January 1757, the Presbytery of Edinburgh issued an "Admonition and Exhortation to all within their bounds." They referred to "the unprecedented countenance which had recently been given to the playhouse;" they spoke of the sentiments of abhorrence which the Church had always entertained in regard to players and plays; they pointed to the number of young men and women who were seduced and ruined by a love for the stage; and quoted acts of the Presbytery and acts of the parliament denouncing theatricals.† This admonition only provoked ridicule on the part of the public. Parodies, epigrams, and songs were poured forth by the wits of the Parliament-house and the town. Dr Adam Ferguson published anonymously a serious pamphlet, entitled, "The Morality of Stage Plays Considered," in which he defended dramatic compositions from the examples in Scripture, especially the story of Joseph and his brethren; and alleged, with truth, that the only act of Assembly touching the matter was one prohibiting plays from being made on the canonical parts of Scripture, or being performed on a Sunday. Dr Carlyle, the fast friend of Home, wrote an ironical squib, under the title of "Reasons why the Tragedy of Douglas should be Burned by the hands of the Common Hangman;" and afterwards

* Mackenzie's Life of Home.

† Morren's Annals, vol. ii. pp. 112–14.

another, suited to the lower ranks of the people, and which was hawked about the streets as a "History of the Bloody Tragedy of Douglas, as it is now performing at the Theatre in the Canongate." The name of the minister of Inveresk was of course concealed; but the effect of the squib was to add two more nights to the unprecedented run of the play.*

But the Presbytery of Edinburgh was not to be deterred from what it conceived to be its duty by either ridicule or reason. It summoned to its bar Mr White, the minister of Liberton, on the charge of having been present in the playhouse. The humbled delinquent acknowledged the charge; but pleaded, by way of alleviation, that he had gone only once; that he had endeavoured to conceal himself in a corner, to avoid giving offence; and expressed his resolution to be more circumspect in the future. He was suspended for a short period from his office, as the punishment of his crime. Not satisfied with punishing the delinquents among themselves, the metropolitan presbytery carefully searched out the names of all the ministers who had been present on the fatal night, and sent information of it to their respective presbyteries. Accordingly, Mr Steele of Stair, Mr Scott of Westruther, Mr Cupples of Swinton, Mr Home of Polwarth, and Mr Dysart of Eccles, were all hauled before their respective presbyteries, and, having made their submissions, were rebuked. The minister of Stair pled that the playhouse was so far away from his parish, he had no reason to apprehend that he would be known, or that his presence would give offence; but the plea did not altogether save him.†

The Presbytery of Haddington commenced proceedings against the minister of Athelstaneford, "the head and front of the offending." Mr Home, when first cited, pled for delay, and after a little hesitation resigned his charge; and by so doing, in all probability, saved himself from deposition. Mr Robertson was still a member of this presbytery. He had never entered the theatre, and so was not in the same condemnation with his friends; and yet, with all his ability and all his influence, he could not save the author of

* Mackenzie's Life of Home.

† Morren's Annals, vol. ii. pp. 115–19. Mackenzie's Life of Home.

"Douglas" from disgrace, so strong was the tide running against him.*

The other delinquents had bowed themselves to the censures of the Church, but Carlyle was not so disposed. When called before the Presbytery of Dalkeith, he neither confessed his sin nor affected sorrow. He was accordingly served with a libel, in which he was charged with familiarly keeping company with players, who were all, in the eye of the law, of bad fame; with attending the rehearsal of the tragedy of "Douglas," and giving directions to the actors; and with appearing openly in the playhouse in the Canongate, taking possession of a box in a disorderly way, and turning out some gentlemen in it. The case was before the Church Courts for some months, but was finally terminated by the Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale administering a rebuke to the offender.† The censure does not appear to have affected his popularity in the Church, for two years afterwards he was chosen to preach before the High Commissioner; in 1770 he was raised to the Moderator's chair; in 1789 he was all but chosen principal clerk of the Assembly; and on till the time of his death, at the advanced age of eighty-four, he occupied one of the highest positions in the Church.

The termination of the proceedings before the Church Courts did not terminate the controversy they had originated;—nor is it terminated yet. The one party declared that never since the day when Galileo was thrown into the prison of the Inquisition, for saying that the earth revolved round the sun, had anything so disgraceful to the Church occurred. Home had written the noblest drama of which his country could boast, and for this he was compelled to evacuate his parish by the terrors of deposition. The Church had degraded the man whom all ages would delight to honour. Was there anything essentially sinful in dramatic composition? If there were bad plays, might there not be good plays? and was it not so with "Douglas?" Was not its morality

* Morren's Annals, vol. ii. pp. 117, 118. Dugald Stewart's Life and Writings of Robertson, p. 12.

† Morren's Annals, vol. ii. pp. 122–29.

faultless? and were not the feelings it delineated the noblest that can fill the breast—the love of a mother for a lost child, and the ambition of a youth to excel? And why this horror for the theatre? Is not man so framed by God that he must have amusements? And if he is denied the amusement resulting from theatrical representations, is it not certain that he will seek for excitement of a coarser and more ruinous kind? Has it not been proved by experience, is it not written in the registers of police-courts, that when theatres are shut crime increases?

It was argued, on the other side, that the playhouse had ever been the favourite haunt of vice. The question was not—What was the duty of Christians supposing the stage purified from immorality? but—What was the duty of Christians looking at the stage simply as it was, notoriously immoral? Were not the great majority of plays, even those of Shakspeare himself, confessedly obscene? Were not things spouted on the stage which could not be repeated in the parlour? Were not many pure minds first familiarized with vice by seeing it represented on the boards of a theatre? many consciences so stunned that they never afterwards recovered their tenderness? And how could the play of "Douglas" be defended on high Christian principles? Did it not use language which looked very like swearing? Did it not give its sanction to something very like suicide?

Such were the arguments of the opposite parties; and, as is usual, there is truth on both sides. Let us try the question by the light of the present day, now that the world is a century older. Would the author of such a play as "Douglas" be dragged before the Church Courts and deposed now? It is certain that Home is generally mentioned as a man of whom his country is proud; and it is certain, too, that never since he left Athelstaneford, amid the regrets of his people, has Poesy visited one of the manses of Scotland, so rudely was she frightened away.

But we must now revert for a little to the operation of patronage. The Moderate party had been gradually gaining in strength. Less and less attention was being paid to the call. In every disputed case the General Assembly ordered

the man who held the presentation to be settled in the parish, however obnoxious he might be to the people; and the presbyteries, awed by the example of Dunfermline, did not in general venture to resist. Among the cases which occurred, that of Nigg, a wild parish in Ross-shire, was perhaps the most remarkable. When the presbytery met in the parish church to induct a Mr Grant, whose character was equivocal, but who held a presentation, not a creature connected with the parish appeared but one man, who was commissioned to tell them that the blood of the parish of Nigg would be required of them, if they should settle a man to the walls of the church. The presbytery had proceeded thus far with the greatest reluctance; but, startled by this strange apparition, they hesitated to proceed further, and resolved to lay the case before the Assembly. The Assembly heard their tale, rebuked them for their cowardice, and enjoined them to proceed.*

The parish of Jedburgh became vacant about the same time, and the magistrates of the town, the elders of the Church, and the great majority of the people, set their hearts upon Thomas Boston of Oxnam, son of Thomas Boston of Ettrick, now in his grave. But first one minister was presented; and when he withdrew, on account of the opposition of the people, another was presented, more obnoxious than the first. The people of Jedburgh resolved to abandon the walls of their old abbey, and erect a meeting-house, where they could hear the gospel preached to them by the lips of a man whom they loved. By the month of December 1757 their church was erected; and Boston, abandoning Oxnam, where he had only L.90 a year, received L.120 from the pious liberality of the people who rallied around him.

In 1759 the Earl of Balcarras presented Dr Chalmers of Elie to the church of Kilconquhar. The people almost to a man opposed his settlement. The Presbytery of St Andrews and the Synod of Fife, sympathizing with the people, delayed to proceed; but the Assembly had no such sympathies, and

* See the Appendix to the Patronage Report, where the case is fully stated. Also Morren's Annals, vol. ii.

† Historical Sketch of the Relief Church.

ordered the presbytery to carry the translation of Dr Chalmers into effect. The people in such cases had now found out a remedy. In the populous village of Colinsburgh they built a church, and invited a Mr Colier from England to come and be their minister.

All this time Mr Gillespie was living and labouring at Dunfermline. His abilities were not high; but his piety was sincere, the cause in which he had suffered was dear to the people, and a numerous congregation clustered round his pulpit. At his first dispensation of the sacrament of the Supper, he asked some of his old friends in the Established Church to give him their assistance; but, afraid of the consequences, they refused. The good man still loved the Church in which he had ministered, and rather than seek assistance elsewhere, he resolved to take the whole burden of the work upon himself. In those days it was no light load; yet at thirteen different sacramental seasons, stretching over five or six years, he manfully bore it. On each of these occasions, within five days, he preached not less than nine sermons, and addressed seven or eight tables.*

When Boston set up his tabernacle at Jedburgh, he invited Gillespie to come and assist him. Their principles were the same; Gillespie loved the son for the father's sake, and went.† Thus these two men were joined together in a common cause. Colier was afterwards invited by the people of Kilconquhar at their recommendation; and, of course, when he came, he joined in their brotherhood. But why should they not be bound together by ecclesiastical ties? They were all Presbyterians; why should they not join themselves together in a Presbytery? Gillespie had long stood alone, but now he was convinced that matters were ripe for such an issue. The door of the Established Church seemed to be hopelessly barred against him. Cast out by it, what better could he do than seek for union and communion with those who thought and felt like himself. On the 22d of October

* This fact was stated by the proprietors of his chapel, in seeking readmittance to the Established Church. It is also stated by Dr Erskine, in his Introduction to one of Gillespie's works. See Morren, vol. i. pp. 278, 279.

† Life of Gillespie; and Historical Sketch of the Relief Church, p. 278.

1761, the three ministers, Gillespie, Boston, and Colier, each accompanied by an elder, met at Colinsburgh, and constituted themselves into a presbytery, calling it the Presbytery of Relief. It was to be the refuge of all those who sought relief from the evils of patronage.*

Thus the foundation of another Dissenting Church was laid. The unrelenting rigour of the General Assembly did it. Why should not Gillespie have been invited back, as the Erskines were? Gillespie never lost his attachment to the Church, as the Erskines had. Time after time his friends moved the Assembly to restore him; but still the Assembly refused to do it. Its coldness did not diminish his love. On his deathbed he recommended his congregation to re-seek the communion of the Established Church, which it actually did; but it was many years before the Assembly stooped to receive it.

* Historical Sketch of the Relief Church, pp. 284–87.

CHAPTER XII.

HUME'S "Essay on Miracles" had never yet been satisfactorily answered. Hume himself thought it unanswerable; and, in truth, one may almost pardon him for thinking so. It is undoubtedly one of the finest pieces of reasoning in our language. The chain seems perfect in every link. No ordinary eye-sight could discover the flaw. But Dr George Campbell, Principal of Marischal College, Aberdeen, one of the ablest men the Church of Scotland has produced, now detected and exposed the weak point of the celebrated argument. A man so eminent deserves a more than passing notice.

He was born at Aberdeen in 1719; and, after completing the usual course of training for the ministry, was presented to the parish of Banchory-Ternan, which sweetly lies on the banks of the Dee, midway between the granite city and the wild scenery of Braemar, where royalty has now found a retreat. In this rural scene he remained for nine years, almost unconsciously disciplining his mind for positions of greater dignity and wider usefulness. In 1757 he was removed to one of the churches of his native city; and two years afterwards, by the interest of the Duke of Argyle, he was promoted to the principality of Marischal College. He proved that he was worthy of the place, by publishing his "Treatise on Miracles" in 1763.

Mr Hume had maintained that belief depends upon experience. Thus, our belief of any fact attested by witnesses results from our experience of the usual conformity of facts

to testimony. "But a miracle," says he, "is a violation of the laws of nature; and as a firm and unalterable experience has established these laws, the proof against a miracle, from the very nature of the fact, is as entire as any argument from experience can possibly be imagined." The laws of nature, in fact, rest upon the authority of a uniform and universal experience; if experience contradicted them they would no longer be laws; and as no testimony can be stronger than such an experience, no testimony can establish a miracle. The evidence of testimony cannot subvert the evidence of experience, for our belief in testimony depends upon experience.

In opposition to this, Dr Campbell maintained that testimony has a natural and original influence upon belief antecedent to all experience; and, consequently, that Mr Hume's argument is based on a false hypothesis. Inexperienced childhood, says he, is credulous; experienced age is distrustful. Experience, instead of creating belief, rather modifies it; and, from the original constitution of our minds, we are inclined to give credence to testimony, till it is overborne by experience, and new testimony instantly makes us mistrust our old experience.

The sight of an apple falling from a tree is said to have suggested to Newton, as he sat in his garden, the law of gravitation; the sight of a ferry-boat is said to have suggested to Dr Campbell, as he mused by the banks of the Dee, his argument on miracles. He introduces the illustration which is said to have suggested the thought. Supposing, he argues, that he had seen a ferry-boat cross and recross the river a thousand times in safety, if a man came and assured him that it had been swept down the stream, in this man's testimony, though opposed to his past experience, he had probable evidence of the fact, and this probability might afterwards be strengthened into certainty by concurrent testimony. Nor did testimony in this case contradict experience, for they related to different facts.

But Dr Campbell further argued, that the experience which established the laws of nature was not distinct from testimony, as our individual experience was necessarily

limited, and we were obliged to rely upon the statements of others. Nor was it true that a universal experience had established the laws of nature, as the histories of all nations were full of the accounts of deviations from them. Experience, therefore, was not the basis of belief.

But not satisfied with overthrowing the position upon which Mr Hume had reared his argument, Dr Campbell attacked the argument itself. Experience, he said, vouched for the past, but not for the future. Things were happening every day contrary to our past experience, and yet we readily believed them. We are continually being furnished with fresh illustrations of this. Till a few years ago, all experience contradicted the possibility of a man projecting his thoughts from Europe to America, through the depths of the Atlantic, in a few seconds of time; but a few witnesses, and only a very few, have recently testified to us that the thing has been done,—and will any one blame us for giving them credence? The past experience of the world may be opposed to the probability of a man rising from the dead; but if sufficient evidence be produced that a man has risen, why should we not believe? In such a case, experience and testimony do not contradict each other: experience simply declares that such a thing does not usually happen; testimony declares that it has happened in this particular instance.

Dr Campbell's Treatise is written not only with great argumentative power, but with the urbanity and respect for his antagonist which became him as a scholar and a Christian. Previous to publishing it he submitted it to the perusal of Mr Hume, through their mutual friend, Dr Blair. Hume indicated some expressions which he thought might be softened, and some passages in which his meaning had been misunderstood. Dr Campbell at once accepted his criticisms, softened or expunged every offensive remark, and so altered his argument as to meet the interpretation of his writings given by the great sceptic himself. When the Treatise appeared, Hume wrote to the Principal a letter, which is alike honourable to both. He thanked him for the courtesy with which he had conducted the controversy; com-

plimented him on the great ingenuity and learning of his performance; and declared that he never had so violent an inclination to break a rule of his early life—never to make a reply—as he thought he could find something specious, at least, to urge in his own defence.

Perhaps Mr Hume might have urged, had he ventured on a reply, that though we have a native tendency to believe testimony, experience regulates this tendency, by teaching us that testimony is frequently false. The child readily assents to testimony because it has no experience of imposture; the man frequently witholds his assent just because he has such experience; and the object of his Essay was not to deny this tendency, but to find out a basis for a rational and intelligent belief. It is the belief of a wise man, and not of a child, he wishes to investigate. Belief founded upon an enlarged experience is likely to be sound; belief simply resulting from the tendency to believe has no warrant whatever.

The real fallacy of Mr Hume's argument lies in the ambiguity of the word "experience." If he means by experience his own individual experience, or the experience of any limited number of men, such an experience does not necessarily contradict testimony, for the experience of others—the experience of those who gave the testimony—may have been different from that of those comprehended in the limited number. If he means by experience, universal experience—the experience of all mankind without exception—then he assumes the thing to be proved. Miracles are alleged to have been within the experience of hundreds and thousands.

Did Hume confine the range of his argument within the same compass as Tillotson confines his refutation of Transubstantiation, quoted in the beginning of his Essay, then it had been unanswerable. No evidence, says Tillotson, can be stronger than that of our senses; the evidence of the Christian religion is not stronger, for the apostles merely relate what they were eye-witnesses of; and therefore no argument, and no evidence, can lead us to believe in a doctrine which is contrary to sense. But Hume could not op-

pose the evidence of his senses to the testimony of the apostles; he could not neutralize their experience by his own experience; and so his argument fails.

The argument fails, however, only because it is pushed too far. Had it been used to prove, not that miracles are utterly incredible, but that they ought not to be believed by a wise man, unless the evidence for them is peculiarly strong, then it had been good. Our own experience, and the experience of the bulk of mankind, are undoubtedly opposed to miracles; miracles, therefore, should be credited only when the testimony in their favour is so strong as to overbear this almost universal opposing experience. Mr Hume tells us that the argument first occurred to him when walking with a Jesuit in the College of La Flech, and disputing with him the credibility of a miracle affirmed to have lately occurred in his convent; and that the Jesuit evaded its force by saying, that it applied to the miracles of the New Testament equally as to those of the Catholic Church.* Under the restriction we have indicated, may it not be applied to its original use, and employed to show the incredibility of the monkish miracles, while it leaves the gospel ones untouched?

The controversy about miracles was entirely Scottish. A Scotchman vended the poison; a Scotchman furnished the antidote. But now both Hume's Essay and Campbell's Answer are known over the world, and have exerted a considerable influence upon the fate of Christianity.

The "Dissertation on Miracles" was not Campbell's only work. He further enriched the theological literature of his country by his "Translation of the Gospels, with Preliminary Dissertations," by his "Lectures on Ecclesiastical History," and by his "Lectures on Theology." He is one of the few great thinkers whom the Church of Scotland has produced. Of diminutive stature and a very delicate frame, he writes with the vigour of an intellectual giant; and it is sometimes difficult to determine whether his critical learning or his robust sense deserve the palm.

While Dr Campbell was reaping his laurels, another Aber-

* Letter, Mr Hume to Principal Campbell.

donian was buckling on his armour to do battle with Hume on the field of metaphysics. This was Dr Thomas Reid. Born in 1710, and educated for the ministry, he was presented to the parish of New Machar in 1737; but so violent was the antipathy to patronage, that the people opposed his settlement, and treated him with rudeness. Through time, however, he completely overcame these prejudices, so that when he was chosen in 1752 to be Professor of Philosophy in King's College, Aberdeen, the people followed him with their blessings and their tears. "We fought against Mr Reid when he came," said an old man, "and would have fought for him when he went away."

While at New Machar, Reid had applied himself closely to metaphysical studies, and, when introduced to collegiate life, he was able to perfect that which he had begun. A man was required to rescue philosophy from universal scepticism. Locke had reduced all our knowledge to sense. Bishop Berkeley, following in his footsteps, had argued that, since all our sensations are within the mind, we can have no evidence of an outer world. David Hume advanced still farther in the same career, and maintained that, as we are conscious only of ideas and impressions, we have no knowledge of either mind or matter. Thus both the spiritual and material worlds were swept away, and ideas and impressions alone were left to fill up the universe. Common-sense revolted against this, but still a faultless logic seemed to prove it. It would be wrong, however, to associate this philosophical scepticism with religious unbelief. The name of Berkeley alone is enough to remove the suspicion, for no holier man ever ministered at an altar than the good bishop of Cloyne, who could descend from the heights of his idealism to write a "Treatise on the Virtues of Tar Water," which he fancied might be employed with advantage in curing the diseases of the poor.

Reid had been long elaborating his "Inquiry into the Human Mind," in which he attacked the prevailing scepticism, and attempted to build up a system of philosophy on the principles of common-sense, or rather upon what is better expressed in the Latin phrase—the *communis sensus*

of mankind. To guard against the danger of misapprehending the meaning of his adversary in a discussion so abstruse, he was anxious that his manuscript should be seen by Mr Hume before it was sent to the press, and the good offices of Dr Blair were again secured. The first response of the sceptic was somewhat surly, but it was evidently more in joke than in earnest. "I wish," said he to Dr Blair, "that the parsons would confine themselves to their old occupation of worrying one another, and leave philosophers to argue with temper, moderation, and good manners." When he had read the manuscript, however, he wrote directly to the author, complimenting him both upon the spirited style in which the "Inquiry" was written, and upon the deep philosophical truths it contained.

In 1764 the "Inquiry" was published, and soon attracted the notice of men devoted to such studies. In the same year Reid was invited by the University of Glasgow to fill the chair of Moral Philosophy, then vacant by the resignation of Adam Smith, the author of the "Wealth of Nations." His system found followers: others than he arose to teach that there are certain general truths, besides those furnished us by sense, which the constitution of our mind compels us to believe, and which lie at the bottom of all reasoning; and he is now generally recognised as the founder of the modern school of Scotch metaphysics.

Six years after the publication of the "Inquiry into the Human Mind," Dr Beattie published his "Essay on the Nature and Immutability of Truth." Beattie was another of those illustrious Aberdonians who were now occupying so prominent a place in the philosophical and religious world. Educated for the Church, he sunk, through poverty, into a schoolmaster; but from a schoolmaster he rose, through dint of ability, to be Professor of Moral Philosophy and Logic in Marischal College. His "Essay" was prepared with prodigious care, and almost immediately obtained a prodigious popularity. It was designed to be a refutation of Hume's scepticism; and though it contained nothing which was not to be found in Reid's "Inquiry," it was read by hundreds to whom Reid's "Inquiry" was totally unknown. It was an

attempt to make metaphysics homely and plain. It brought philosophy down from her tripod, and placed her on a common stool. It must be confessed that Dr Beattie has written more like a polemic than a philosopher, and frequently makes up for want of profundity by virulent abuse; but this made his book all the more popular with English bishops and English rectors, who hated Hume, but could not argue with him. Beattie visited London, and found himself a lion. He was introduced to George III., and had a private interview with his Majesty. "I never stole a book but one," said the king to the philosopher, "and that was yours: I stole it from the queen to give it to Lord Hertford to read."

Dr Beattie's celebrity as a champion of the truth obtained him something more substantial than dinners with duchesses and compliments from royalty. He got a pension of L.200 a year through his friend Dr Porteous, then Bishop of Chichester, and afterwards Bishop of London. He was offered preferment in the Church of England if he would only accept of it; but he had the good-sense and self-abnegation to decline it.* Time has not sanctioned the high place at first awarded to the "Essay on Truth." It is written with neatness; but instead of strengthening the arguments of Campbell and Reid, it fritters them down. It is still read by many who, without having a genius for abstruse speculation, have some curiosity to see an infidel demolished; but it can never be regarded as a text-book either in philosophy or theology. It however served its turn. Beattie's poetry is better than his divinity. His "Minstrel" contains many passages of great beauty. His critical and philological essays entitle him to distinction among the writers of polite literature. Though never original, and never deep, he is always pleasing and always perspicuous.

Never had the Church of Scotland possessed so many illustrious men as she did at this period. It was the Augustan age in her history. Besides the men who clustered in Aberdeen,—Reid, Campbell, Beattie, Gerard,—Edinburgh could point out on her streets men equally great,—Robertson,

* Sir William Forbes's Life and Writings of Dr Beattie.

Blair, M'Queen, Erskine. Of these, Robertson was undoubtedly the greatest. In 1758 he had been translated from Gladsmuir to Edinburgh; and a year afterwards he published his "History of Scotland," which at once placed him at the head of living historians. Hume, Walpole, Garrick, the Bishop of Norwich, the Earl of Mansfield, all hastened to say how greatly they had been charmed by his finely balanced sentences, and by a narrative which never allows the interest to flag. In 1762 he was made Principal of the University of Edinburgh; and he was not only recognised as the leader of the Moderate party in the Church, but he was honoured by all as one who had thrown a new splendour around the literature of his country.

The contests in the Church Courts regarding patronage still continued. The Moderate party had steadily gained in numbers and strength; the Popular party, though often beaten, were not subdued. So often as they were thrown to the ground, they got up again with renovated vigour. Either party could boast of eminent debaters; and both Henry Mackenzie and Dugald Stewart, no mean authorities, declare that the oratory of the General Assembly at that period was not inferior to that of the British Senate.* The Popular party was led by Dr Dick, Dr M'Queen, Dr Erskine, Mr Freebairn of Dumbarton, and Mr Stevenson of St Madoes. Dr Dick, though mobbed and maltreated by the populace of Lanark, on account of disputes between the burgh and family of Lee as to the right of patronage, stood firm by the Popular cause. His eloquence was chaste, argumentative, commanding, carrying conviction and compelling respect. His ablest clerical coadjutor was Mr Freebairn, whose eloquence was of a different kind—full of humour and pleasantry; sometimes stinging by cutting sarcasms, sometimes breaking out into crushing invectives, always giving freshness and vigour to the debate. They had an able auxiliary from the laity in Mr Crosbie, the Vice-Dean of the Faculty of Advocates, whose fiery and fervid declamation was peculiarly fitted to make a powerful impression upon such a body as the General Assembly.

* Mackenzie's Life of Home. Stewart's Life of Robertson.

The Moderates were led by Dr Cumming, Dr Drysdale, and Dr Robertson. The two first brought to the help of their party very considerable powers of debate, together with business habits, untiring assiduity, and conciliatory manners. But Dr Robertson was clearly the guiding spirit of the party. When his influence in the Assembly was fully established, he seldom rose to speak till toward the close of a debate, when, without attempting any of the higher flights of oratory, he was always so plausible, so persuasive, so temperate, that he seldom failed to carry a majority of the House along with him.

The politics of both parties were gradually undergoing a change. During the leadership of Dr Cumming, the Moderates joined with the Popular party in maintaining the necessity of a call to constitute the pastoral relationship; only they held that a call from the heritors and elders was all that was required, while their opponents insisted upon a call subscribed by a majority of the heads of families in the parish. In practice, however, no unvarying rule had been followed. Calls not subscribed by a majority even of the heritors and elders had been frequently sustained. The names of men who were neither heritors nor elders had been often received when names were scarce. No instance, in fact, had occurred for many years of a presentation being set aside merely on account of the paucity of signatures attached to the call. Dr Robertson now declared that the call of the parishioners was not essential to the pastoral tie. He held that the Church Courts were bound to admit every qualified minister who held a valid presentation, whether he received a call from the people or not. The call was merely the expression of the people's good-will toward him; but it was recognised by no act of parliament, and therefore was not essential to his being ordained as their minister.*

There was another change, not less important, gradually introduced. Both parties had hitherto allowed the congregation to urge objections against an unacceptable presentee before the presbytery, and objections of almost any kind were heard and considered, though too generally set aside in

* Principal Hill's Sketch of Robertson's Ecclesiastical Policy.

the end. But Dr Robertson and his followers now insisted that no objections should be admitted but objections against the life or doctrine of the presentee.* This new policy was simple, consistent, and easily understood. Its promoters said that, as members of a State Church, they were bound to square their conduct with the law; the Act 1712 prescribed a certain course, and they were under a necessity to follow it; their function being merely ministerial, it was their duty to carry out what the statute had ordained; and that, if this was not done hitherto, it was all the more necessary that it should be done now.

But notwithstanding this change of policy, the old forms were scrupulously observed. In every case, an attempt at least was made to procure a call. The term, however, was altered in several instances in the Record of Assembly, and in place of "call," "concurrence" was introduced.† The new word was an exposition of the new policy: the call was henceforward to be regarded merely as the concurrence of the people with the presentation of the patron. If the concurrence was given, it was well; if it was withheld, it was a pity, but still it did not weaken the presentation.

The people, however, had not forgotten the ancient traditions of the Church, and in many cases opposed with great violence and obstinacy the intrusion of unacceptable ministers upon them. When their grievances were carried up to the General Assembly, they found an eloquent utterance there,—but it was always in vain; and when the presbytery afterwards met to carry out the sentence of the supreme court, it was not unfrequently hooted and stoned by the enraged populace; and in some instances the military required to be called in to preserve the peace. Thus in 1764 the Presbytery of Irvine met at Kilmarnock to induct a minister, but a riot was the result. Ten of the rioters were afterwards tried at the circuit court, and three of them sentenced to be imprisoned for a month, then to be whipped through the streets of Ayr, and afterwards to find caution for their good behaviour for a year.‡

* Sir Henry Moncreiff's Life of Dr Erskine, Appendix. † Ibid.

‡ Morren's Annals, vol. ii. p. 290.

But while the Moderates were consolidating their strength, and enjoying their triumphs, dissent was spreading with alarming rapidity. It was only thirty years since the Erskines had turned their backs upon the Established Church, and already a hundred and twenty meeting-houses had been erected. This increase of dissent was almost universally ascribed to the pressure of patronage. The sequence of the one from the other was in fact seen. When a parish had in vain opposed a presentee before the presbytery, the synod, the General Assembly—when the man was ordained in spite of their remonstrances—instead of succumbing, they built a meeting-house, and threw themselves into the arms of the Secession or the Relief. They would rather make pecuniary sacrifices, which they were ill able to afford, than yield; they would rather pay a minister out of their own pockets than submit themselves to a minister supported by the tithes, who had been forced upon them by a high-handed patron.

This state of matters was cause of distress and alarm to many of the well-wishers of the Church. They resolved to bring the matter before the General Assembly, to see if no remedy could be found. The matter was first stirred in the Assembly of 1765. An overture was laid before the House, in which it was declared that the schism in the Church was growing; that there were now in the country a hundred and twenty meeting-houses, to which a hundred thousand persons, formerly belonging to the Established Church, resorted; and that dissent was taking the deepest root in the largest towns. The Assembly appointed a committee to consider the matter.*

Meantime the subject began to be discussed out of doors, and the Seceders were by no means pleased that they should be spoken of as schismatics. They declared that they were animated by no sectarian feelings; that they were loyal subjects and peaceful citizens; and that if the Church wished to regain them, she must instantly begin a covenanted work of reformation.†

* Scots Magazine, vol. xxvii. p. 27.

† See Gib's Letter in the Scots Magazine, vol. xxix. pp. 230–32.

When the Assembly met in 1766, the report of the Committee on Schism was laid before it. It recommended that the Assembly should appoint an inquiry into the facts alleged touching the growth of schism; that it should consider whether no remedy could be found for the abuse of patronage, which was one great cause of the evil; and that it should nominate a committee to correspond with presbyteries and gentlemen of property and influence upon the subject. The Popular party, who thought their hands were clean of the schism, mustered in strength to support this report. They had already obtained an advantage in the fact of such a report having been agreed upon by a committee of the last Assembly. It was thought by some that a reaction was begun, and that new vigour alone was necessary to victory. The Moderate party, however, were prepared for the contest. They would not willingly surrender the principles they had preached, and the power they had wielded for so many years. At ten in the morning the debate began, and it continued without intermission till nine at night.

On the part of the Moderates it was argued that dissent was not an evil; or, if an evil, it was a necessary evil. There always had been, and there always would be, divisions in the Church. Men's minds were different; their education and habits were different; and in a free country it was impossible to avert religious animosities. And why charge patronage with the schism? In so far as patronage had anything to do with the matter, the blame lay with those who instilled into the minds of the people the pernicious and unfounded idea that they had a divine right, purchased by Christ, to choose their own ministers, and thus stirred them up to oppose every licentiate who came to them with a presentation. Had not men of the greatest ability and the purest piety been resisted by the contentious spirit of people thus goaded on to violence and tumult? Were not patrons in general much better able to choose suitable ministers for the parish churches than the illiterate peasantry who attended them? If the election lay with the people, would not sound be preferred to sense, and men of an inferior class find an entrance to the Church? Would not contests arise about

competing candidates more bitter than those which had occurred under patronage, and destroy the peace of parishes and the respectability of the clergy? But while some might doubt this, did any doubt that patronage was the law of the land? It now formed an integral part of their ecclesiastical constitution, and its repeal was altogether hopeless. All opposition to it was a flying in the face of the law; and the present movement would only encourage the people in their resistance, instead of teaching them that obedience which became them. The Church had the remedy in its own hands—it might be more careful in regard to the men whom it licensed.

In addition to these arguments, it was urged that the overture tended to persecution; that the proposed inquiry into the number of meeting-houses resembled the attempts of tyrannical governments to procure lists of conventicles, in order to put penal statutes in force against them; that the Seceders themselves looked upon it in this light; and that presbyteries, instead of being unanimous in obedience to the orders involved in such an inquiry, would in some cases resist, and in others become scenes of unhallowed contention.

Principal Robertson, as might be expected, took a prominent part in the debate. He gave a sketch of the history of patronage in the Church of Scotland, to show its beneficial influence in elevating the character of the clergy. He alleged that the ministers at the Revolution, and for a considerable period after it, were men indeed of virtue and piety, but of mean abilities and little acquaintance with the world. He affirmed that the Act of Queen Anne was no sooner passed than young men of a higher class began to educate themselves for the ministry; that the character of the clergy had gradually improved; and that never had it been higher than it was at that present time.

On the opposite side, it was maintained by the advocates of popular rights, that the schism was a great and growing evil, and, unless checked in time, would eventually ruin the Church. But though they saw and lamented the increase of Secession, they declared that, so far were they from wishing to persecute the Seceders, they wished to remove the

reasons of their separation from the Establishment, and so open a door for their return. In regard to the cause of the schism, there could be no doubt. Patronage, if not the only cause, was the great cause. Had they not seen many examples of whole parishes abandoning the Establishment when a disagreeable settlement took place? Nor was this to be attributed to the men who advocated the rights of the people. They taught no such doctrines as were imputed to them; they preached no such seditious harangues as they were charged with. Instead of fomenting discontent, they had often done all in their power to allay it, though they could not surrender the principles which they cherished. It was vain to defend patronage after the experience which the Church had had of its working. Every day was revealing the unhappy consequences of it. Patrons were looking upon their rights simply as a species of property to be turned to the best account; shameful practices were resorted to in order to obtain presentations; simony was scarcely concealed; and the good of the Church was never considered. If the people had been sometimes unreasonable, had not the patrons been unreasonable too? had they not often been worse? What could be more melancholy than a parish upon which a minister had been thrust contrary to the wishes of the people? How small was the prospect of either usefulness or comfort?

But it has been alleged, said the Popular orators, that the uniform enforcing of presentations will lead to peace and good order. When the people see that resistance is hopeless, they will quietly submit. Surely such a peace is not to be desired; it is that described by Tacitus—*Solitudinem faciunt, et pacem vocant.* The truth is, the people of Scotland will never submit. When they are driven to despair they will abandon the Church, to swell the ranks of dissent. The people of England, never accustomed to do anything else, willingly receive every new incumbent whom the patron may present; but it never will be so with the people of Scotland. Their ideas are different, and they are too deeply rooted to be plucked up. You must make them indifferent about religion before you will make them indifferent about their ministers. It is true, patronage is the law of the land; but

are we not entitled, as free subjects, to seek a change of the law? Are we not accustomed every year to instruct our Commission to take every opportunity of seeking a redress of the grievance? But while we do this, we are inconsistent with ourselves. The law, hard in itself, has been made harder still by the decisions of the Assembly. A construction is put upon it which it was never designed to bear; all liberty of objecting on the part of the people is taken away; and our parishes are handed over to the tender mercies of patrons who care nothing for the spiritual interests of the people.*

When the speakers had exhausted themselves, and the vote was taken, eighty-five were found to be in favour of the overture, and ninety-nine against it. The Moderate party had once more asserted its superiority. But the energy with which the debate was maintained shows the alarm which had arisen from the spread of dissent; and the eighty-five champions who did battle for popular election proved that the cause was by no means a lost one. The contest, lost in the Assembly, was continued in the public prints; and an agitation was begun to have the Act of 1732, touching the calling of ministers, revived; for the act of the Moderate party, which drove Ebenezer Erskine from the Church, would have abundantly satisfied the Popular party now.

The section of the Church led by Principal Robertson was subjected to another imputation besides that of binding the yoke of patronage upon the neck of the people. They were accused of sheltering clerical delinquents. Unhappily, about this period, several cases of immorality were brought before the Church Courts; and in some instances the offenders escaped either from some error of form in the process, or from an alleged defect in the evidence. There were other cases of men, formerly deposed, restored upon proof of their penitence and reformation. The opponents of the Principal declared, that by this course of conduct he was lowering the standard of morality in the Church, and bringing the sacred

* Scots Magazine. Morren's Annals, vol. ii. I have here given a condensation of the speeches made in the Assembly on this occasion.

office of the ministry into disrepute. It was ill done, they said, for clergymen to employ their subtlety and sophistry upon terms of law and rules of evidence unknown to ecclesiastical courts, in order to set aside sufficient proof in the eye of every sensible man.*

The friends of the Principal, on the other hand, maintained that the greatest service which he rendered to the Church was his improvement of its judicial procedure. They remarked, that a court so popular in its constitution as the General Assembly was but ill calculated for the administration of justice. Its members were too numerous to be free from passion and to feel responsibility, and too fluctuating to be well acquainted either with the form of process or the law of evidence. How was it to be expected that a court consisting of nearly four hundred members, many of whom sat in it for the first time, could patiently and dispassionately investigate evidence, so as to arrive at a proper conclusion? In such a multitude of undisciplined judges there was a constant tendency to set aside all forms together, and to give judgment from their own convictions, apart altogether from the evidence led. Principal Robertson vigorously opposed himself to such loose practices. He wished to see justice dispensed in the General Assembly with the same gravity and attention to rule as in the Court of Session. He insisted upon a scrupulous observance of every form, and would rather allow a delinquent to escape than have him convicted upon evidence which might satisfy some minds, but which did not amount to legal proof. The principles he unfolded gradually gained ground; and the series of righteous decisions which, during a long course of years, he dictated, formed a directory for the future guidance of the Church.†

When the Seceders abandoned the Church, they carefully kept themselves aloof from it, as from a thing that would defile them if but touched. They regarded the Church of Scotland as the zealous Protestant regards the Church of Rome. But not so with the members of the Relief Presby-

* Scots Magazine, vol. xxix. p. 125.

† Hill's Sketch of Robertson's ecclesiastical policy in Stewart's Life of Robertson.

tery. Their old ecclesiastical sympathies did not die when they retired from the Establishment. They never brought a railing accusation against their mother-Church. They did not regard themselves as organizing a hostile community—as setting up altar against altar—but rather as opening a sanctuary to which those oppressed by patronage might flee. They wished to occupy the same position in regard to the Church of Scotland which the Wesleyans did for a time in regard to the Church of England. From the very first they cherished catholic ideas of Christian communion. They desired rather than avoided ministerial fellowship with their brethren in the Church. The position which they thus occupied, and the ideas they cherished, led several probationers and ministers in the Established Church to join them, believing that by joining the Relief they scarcely deserted the Establishment.

This was seen in the case of Simson. An unacceptable minister had been settled at Bothwell; and the people, unable to reconcile themselves to his ministry, gave a call to Simson, a licentiate of the Presbytery of Paisley. Simson accepted the call; asked from his presbytery an extract of his license and a certificate of his character, as if he had done no wrong; received ordination from Gillespie and the Presbytery of Relief; and entered upon the discharge of his pastoral duties. Some of the ministers of the Church at once recognised him as a brother, properly invested with the ministerial character. In the High Church of Paisley he administered the sacrament of Baptism; in the College Church of Glasgow he dispensed the sacrament of the Supper. There were some, however, inclined to censure such divisive courses; and in January 1764 Simson was brought before the Presbytery of Paisley. He readily acknowledged the facts charged against him, but pled that the Presbytery of Relief did not teach the principles of separation; that he was only affording a temporary relief to a part of the parish of Bothwell who were anxious to continue in connection with the Establishment; and that he conceived he was doing the Church good service rather than injury. For himself, he added, he greatly desired to continue within the

Establishment, and that he did not think he had done anything to prevent it. The presbytery gave no decision; but the Commission of Assembly declared Simson no longer a licentiate of the Church.*

The case of Mr Bain, minister of the High Church of Paisley, made a still greater noise, and exhibited more fully the position which the Relief wished to maintain toward the Establishment. Mr Bain resigned his charge in Paisley, and accepted the pastoral charge of a Relief congregation in Edinburgh. In his letter to the presbytery, containing his resignation, he declared "that this change in his position made no change in his former creed and Christian belief; none in his principles of Christian and ministerial communion; nay, none in his cordial regard to the constitution and interest of the Church of Scotland, which he had solemnly engaged to support some more than thirty years ago, and hoped to do so while he lived."

The presbytery were at a loss what to do with this letter; and the consequence was, that the case went up to the Assembly which met in May 1766. Bain thought he had done nothing worthy of punishment, and that the affair might rest with his resignation of his charge in Paisley. But the Assembly thought differently. They declared him no longer a minister of the Established Church, and prohibited their ministers from holding any ministerial communion with him. Of this sentence Mr Bain bitterly complained. He saw no inconsistency in his having the oversight of a Relief congregation, and continuing a minister of the Established Church. But it was of the latter part of the sentence that he complained the most, as it cut him off from ministerial communion with his former brethren. "The Relief Presbytery," said he, "does not poison the people with principles of bigotry and separation, but rather keeps them from that snare, and preserves them in as full communion with the worthy ministers of the Church of Scotland as ever. Is it candid, then, or political, first to cast such men out of her communion, which they and their people earnestly desire, and yet to cast on them the most injurious calumny of sec-

* Morren's Annals, vol. ii. pp. 292–94.

taries and schismatics? Whatever may be said of others, slander itself will almost blush to say, that the Presbytery of Relief have any separating principles. They dare not decline communion with any who have the knowledge, the visible, uncorrupted profession, of real Christianity: the laws of Jesus Christ ordain to receive such; by what authority, then, are they intercommuned?"*

From all this it is very evident that, had the Church wished it, the Presbytery of Relief might have been preserved as a firm ally. Her churches would have been little else than chapels of ease in connection with the Establishment—cities of refuge to which the people might flee when oppressed by patronage, and from which they might return to the bosom of their mother when the day of oppression was past. Popular ministers reared in the Establishment would have been invited to fill the Relief pulpits, and fellowship in word and sacraments preserved. But such a state of things was very far from the notions of the men who at that time ruled the General Assembly. They aimed at making the Church a society complete in itself, bound by its own rules, and fenced about by its own constitution. They had no idea of shaking hands with Dissenters, or tolerating within their pale men who ventured to disregard their decisions. The Church must not be many societies, but one society. The Church of Rome, in its vastness, had comprehended many orders of religious, each of which had done its own work, and helped on the greatness of the whole; but the Church of Scotland must be one and undivided.

The Presbytery of Relief were inclined to continue in communion with the Established Church, not only because they felt no hostility toward it, but because they held, from the very first, large ideas of Christian communion. The Churches of the Reformation had at one time been truly catholic in their spirit, and knew no limit to their love but Popery; but they had gradually shrunk within themselves, and drawn in the generous help and sympathy which they had once extended to each other. Churches had become national; and even national Churches had not unfrequently

* Morren's Annals, vol. ii. pp. 314–28.

been divided against themselves. Each kept carefully aloof from the others. The Church of Scotland had become as narrow and exclusive as the rest. The Presbytery of Relief revived a truth that was ready to die, when they taught that, notwithstanding the multiplicity of sects, there was but one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all. The communion-table, said they, is spread not for the Burgher or the Antiburgher, not for the Independent or the Episcopalian, not for the Churchman or the Dissenter, but simply for the Christian. By this doctrine the Relief Church steadily held so long as it had a being. The same doctrine has been held by many of the English Independents. It found an eloquent advocate in Robert Hall, who laid down the broad principle, that it could be no sin to hold communion upon earth with any whom we might dare hope to meet with in heaven.

But we must now revert to some violent settlements which occurred at this time. In the month of April 1767, the Presbytery of Glasgow was to meet at Eaglesham to ordain a Mr Clark who had been presented by the Earl of Eglinton, and who was known to be peculiarly obnoxious to the people. When Principal Leechman and some friends reached the village, they found a crowd assembled, armed with sticks and stones. When they attempted to get access to the church, the mob began to hoot and hiss, pelted them with stones, bespattered them with dirt, took possession of every avenue, and declared they would defend their posts to the last. The unwelcome visitors were compelled to take refuge in a house, thankful that they had escaped with their lives. But here a new difficulty presented itself. Though there were several clergymen present from other presbyteries, only one clergyman beside Dr Leechman, belonging to the Presbytery of Glasgow, was there. Terror had prevented them. The court could not be constituted; the ordination could not take place. It was therefore deemed expedient to sound a retreat; but while they were getting into their carriages, the rabble again surrounded them, with terrible yells. The horses were soon in motion, and the flight began; but the mob followed in full cry, and did

not desist from the pursuit till the defeated intrusionists were beyond the bounds of the parish. The men of Eaglesham, however, had only a temporary triumph. In June following, Mr Clark was ordained their minister.*

In 1762 the Duke of Hamilton presented a Mr Wells to the parish of Shotts; but so fiercely did the people oppose him, and so unwilling were the presbytery to proceed with his settlement, that it was 1768 before the litigation was brought to a close. In May of that year the presbytery met at Shotts, by the express orders of the General Assembly, to ordain the presentee; but they were obstructed by a mob who prevented them from entering the church or the churchyard, and obliged them to leave the parish with their duty undischarged. The sheriff of the county afterwards intimated to them that he had made arrangements to have a body of infantry and dragoons under his orders, to protect them in the execution of their duty when they next met at Shotts; but the divines, unwilling to proceed to so solemn an act surrounded by Herod and his men of war, preferred ordaining Mr Wells at Hamilton.†

Mr Thomson, minister of Gargunnock, received a presentation to St Ninian's, and accepted it. The people disliked him, the presbytery sympathized with them, and seven years were wasted in a fruitless effort to shake him off. At length, on the 29th of July 1773, the presbytery met at St Ninian's, by the peremptory command of the Assembly, to induct him. Several members were absent, though the Assembly had enjoined all, under the pain of its censures, to attend. Mr Findlay, minister of Dollar, presided; and it was observed that in his prayer he asked no blessing upon the purpose for which they were met. After prayer he at once proceeded to address the presentee, who rose up, according to custom. "We are here met this day," said he, "in obedience to the sentence of the General Assembly, to admit you minister of St Ninian's. There has been a formidable opposition made against you by six hundred heads of families, sixty heritors, and all the elders except one.

* Appendix to the Parliamentary Report on Patronage, pp. 137–42.

† Ibid. p. 154.

This opposition has continued for seven years; and if you shall this day be admitted, you can have no pastoral relation to the souls of this parish; you will never be regarded as the shepherd to go before the sheep; they know you not, and will not follow you. Your admission can only be regarded as a sinecure, and yourself as a stipend-lifter. Instead of doing good you will bring ruin and desolation on the parish, and be able to adopt the answer of Marius to the Roman prætor—'Go, tell him that thou hast seen the exiled Marius sitting on the ruins of Carthage.' Now, sir, I conjure you, by the mercy of God, give up this presentation; I conjure you, by the great number of souls of St Ninian's, who are like sheep going astray without a shepherd to lead them, and who will never hear you, never submit to you, give it up; and I conjure you, by that peace which you would wish to have in a dying hour, and that awful and impartial account which in a little time you must give to God of your own soul, and of the souls of this parish, before the tribunal of our Lord Jesus Christ, give it up!" "I forgive you for what you have now said," was the reply of Thomson; "may God forgive you. Proceed to execute the orders of your superiors."*

A scene so painful as this gives us a vivid picture of patronage in collision with popular opinion. No ordinary circumstances could justify the course which the moderator of the presbytery pursued, the language which he spoke, the conjurations he employed. In no ordinary circumstances could he have ventured to do as he did. Excitement must have reached its highest pitch. As it was, Findlay was afterwards summoned before the General Assembly to give an account of his conduct; but though the Assembly might censure, the people approved.

After this period, there were fewer contests about patronage before the Courts of the Church. It was now fully understood that patronage was the law, and that the General Assembly was determined to enforce the law. The people did not resist, because they saw it was useless. The patrons might present any one they pleased; there was little proba-

* Weekly Magazine. Scots Magazine.

bility of their being thwarted in their choice. In some cases the parishioners submitted to the presentee, and said nothing; in some cases they joined the Seceder congregation in the neighbourhood. Dr Robertson had carried out his principles to a successful issue. He had triumphed over very formidable obstacles, and given peace to the Church.

If Dr Robertson was right in interpreting the Act of Queen Anne as he did—if the right of the patron was unrestricted by the opinions of the people—the policy he pursued was undoubtedly the wisest and the best. It was cruel to keep people fretting against bars which they could not break. It was right to make them feel the strength of the law, and that it was vain to struggle against it. Nothing is worse than uncertainty as to what is or is not the law. For nearly twenty years before the rise of Dr Robertson, the people were mocked by illusory hopes. They were taught to believe that their call was equally necessary as the patron's presentation to constitute the pastoral tie. In a multitude of cases they refused their call, in a multitude of cases they violently opposed the presentee; but, after years of contention before the Church Courts, they were in every case sent empty away. During Cumming's leadership, the law was dubious and the people were turbulent; during Robertson's administration, the law was certain and the people became submissive.

People, however, will ever doubt whether the Moderate party did not put a harder meaning upon the law of patronage than it was originally intended to bear; and further, whether a law, however interpreted, so opposed to the feelings of the nation, could be good. The General Assembly had at that period the balance of power in its hands; it threw its weight into the scale of the patron, and broke the spirit of the people; had it thrown its weight into the scale of the people, it might have lessened, if it did not destroy, the pretensions of patrons.

The records of the General Assembly at this period are singularly barren of interest. The battle with Prelacy had been long ago fought and won. The battle between patrons and parishioners had abated. There was scarcely a breeze

of excitement to ruffle the smooth current of ecclesiastical affairs. George III. had put on his grandfather's crown, and young scions of royalty were beginning to sprout thickly about the throne; and the Assembly's minutes are greatly occupied with annual congratulations upon the birth of the annual prince. The American war, moreover, had begun, and there were addresses about the clemency of his Majesty, the wisdom of his Ministers, and the indomitable valour of his fleets and armies. But all was in vain. The colonists cut their cables, and drifted away from under the lee of the mother-country.

But while all was quiet in synod and General Assembly, there was an exciting controversy going on in the press regarding the propriety and obligatoriness of creeds. It was no new question; it was at least as old as the Reformation. There had always been many to say that the Word of God was the only rule of faith and manners; and that it was impiety in man to attempt to supplement it. The Bible, they argued, is either the most perfect compilation of Christian doctrine posssible, or it is not: if it is, what need of others? if it is not, its authority ceases. But Confessions of Faith, it was further maintained, not only do damage to the paramount authority of Scripture; they destroy every man's right of interpreting the Scriptures for himself. The right of private interpretation was one of the great principles earnestly contended for at the Reformation. Why give the people this right only to take it away again? Are not creeds authoritative interpretations of the Word of God? Is there any room for private interpretation under the shadow of this authoritative interpretation? If a minister interpret the Scriptures for himself, will he not be deposed? If a layman do so, will he not be excommunicated? What severer penalties could be imposed? Within the pale of Protestantism, as of Popery, must not every man believe just as the Church believes?

These had long been favourite maxims with the Independents; but now sentiments of a similar kind began to creep into the Church. The objection to symbols evidently arose from the difficulty which some clergymen felt fully to

believe all the thousand independent propositions of which the Westminster Confession consists. So far back as the days of Wodrow, some argumentative ministers had let it escape them that they would gladly be rid of the Confession, as they felt it a hindrance to the free exercise of their logic.* But this feeling had now gained much greater force, and speculative men complained of their being so hampered and hedged in by the conclusions of the Westminster Divines, that all liberty of thought was taken away from them, and they were required to subscribe a mass of doctrines, some of which appeared to them to be hardly compatible with Scripture. The reason, thus pent in by walls too strong to be broken down, began to seek for corners in which it might skulk, or for an outlet by which it might escape to the free air of heaven. In what sense are subscriptions to Confessions to be understood? how far are such subscriptions binding? were questions which began to be debated.

No Church, it was argued, has a right to impose upon its members a subscription to a creed, except in so far as that creed is agreeable to the Word of God. The creed cannot be put above the Scriptures; it cannot even be put upon a level with them. The creed may teach, but the Bible must prove, for this is all that even the Romanists pretend; and therefore an appeal must always be from the creed to the Bible. As the Church must be understood to impose the test with this restriction, so with this restriction every subscriber must be understood to take it. The Confession of Faith is subscribed not as absolutely true, but only in so far as it is agreeable to the Word of God. By subscribing it no man debars himself from studying and interpreting the Word of God for himself, for this is the birthright of every Christian, and especially of every Protestant. No man can divest himself of this inalienable privilege; no Church can decently punish him for exercising it. Even the Westminster Assembly itself confesses that all councils and synods since the days of the Apostles may err; and therefore it could not design to claim infallibility for itself, or that any should subscribe its dogmas, except in so far as

* See Wodrow's Correspondence, vol. iii.

they are agreeable to the divine standard of religion and morality. Nor could the parliament of 1690 mean that all the ministers and people of Scotland should believe exactly as the Westminster doctors believed, for God has not made all men's minds alike. The parliament enacted the Confession of Faith only that it might serve as a test of conformity to the Presbyterian establishment. In that sense was it imposed; in that sense may it be taken.*

Such sentiments were not allowed to pass unopposed. It was remarked that they who held such opinions, and attempted by means of them to justify their subscribing a creed, and yet not believing every individual proposition of it, confounded two things which were essentially distinct. The one was, how far any Church or society of Christians is authorized to require from those of its communion a subscription to Confessions or Formularies of Faith of human composition; and the other was, how far any person can, in consistence with honesty, subscribe such Confessions, and yet not believe every proposition in them to be truth. The first of these questions, it was argued, was totally distinct from the second. Although it were wrong for a Church to impose human creeds upon its members, that did not make it right for a man to subscribe these while he did not believe them. The Church of Scotland, it was said, may have derogated from the dignity of Scripture, may have interfered with the right of private judgment, in imposing a creed; but this is no reason why any man should play a dishonest part by subscribing as true what he believed to be false. Nor will it do for any one to say that he subscribed the formularies only in so far as they were agreeable to Scripture. Might not a man with such a reservation put his name to the canons of the Council of Trent, or even to the Koran? The proposition amounted simply to this, that he believed the Confession so far as he believed it. The creed did not limit his faith: his faith limited the creed. Did the men who took the test under such a restriction mention it? If not, they were guilty of mental reservation worthy of Jesuits.†

* See Scots Magazine, vol. xxix. p. 175. † Ibid. vols. xxix. xxx.

Other clergymen, unable to answer such arguments, proposed a different solution of the difficulty. Unable to untie the knot, they would cut it. They proposed to abolish all tests whatever, or at least a test so minute in its dogmatism as the Confession of Faith. Surely, they said, it was not essential to salvation that a man should believe everything that was contained in a compilation so wide in its range, and yet so specific in its details, as the Westminster Confession. Why tax Faith so exorbitantly? Why give Reason so little room for exercise? Anonymous articles in magazines were the vehicles of much reasoning like this; but the terrors of ecclesiastical censure made the authors conceal themselves. No minister ever proposed in the Church Courts that Confessions should be dispensed with. Dr Robertson was known to be decidedly opposed to any such measure. It is certain that an act of parliament, as well as an act of Assembly, would have been necessary to such a step. The Church's faith is fixed by statute.

It is certain that creeds have subserved a great purpose. They have kept Churches which might have drifted out to sea fast at their moorings; they have made the peculiar teaching of Churches a known and unvarying certainty. In regard to the charge of minuteness, it is of the nature of creeds to become more and more minute. Creeds have always been framed to combat particular errors; and accordingly, for every new heresy that arises, a new clause must be inserted in the creed. The Bible itself was at first the only form of faith. The only confession exacted of the convert was a confession that Jesus was the Christ. But when men began to doubt of the divinity of Christ, the Athanasian Creed was framed; and when Romanists and Protestants began to disagree, the creed of Pope Pius IV. was constructed to condemn the opinions of the one, and the Westminster Confession the opinions of the other. But it is possible to be heretical even within the limits of confessions and formularies. As Christians at first diverged from one another by affixing different meanings to passages of Scripture, the members of the same Church may diverge by affixing different meanings to passages of their creed.

When Professor Simson was tried first for Arminianism, and afterwards for denying the necessary divinity of the Son, he strenuously maintained his adherence to the Confession of Faith. In the Church of England, there is at present exhibited the spectacle of two parties holding very opposite doctrines, and each professing to find its peculiar belief in the Thirty-nine Articles. The language of creeds may be wrested as well as that of Scripture; and therefore there must ever be in the Church an authoritative interpreter.

The controversy about tests has recently been revived. It has been said that they are a stumbling-block and a snare; that they stand in the way of honest men enjoying offices which otherwise they might honour, and are no impediment in the way of the dishonest. These arguments have been hitherto used only in the case of professors and schoolmasters; but are they not equally applicable to ministers? May there not be scrupulous ministers who strain at a gnat? may there not be unscrupulous ones who swallow a camel? Is it not certain that the Church has lost the services of very eminent men from nicety of faith? And yet is this a sufficient reason for abolishing ecclesiastical creeds? It is certain that if they were abolished a revolution in the religious world would speedily ensue, the end of which no man could predict.

About this period, the country was seized with one of those Popish panics which have more than once disgraced it. Ever since the Reformation, sanguinary laws had existed against Roman Catholics. The Reformed religion was no sooner established than death was denounced as the doom of the priest who should venture to say a mass. To this primary law, other laws almost equally severe were afterwards added to meet what were conceived to be emergencies—the seductions of Jesuits, the apostacy of Protestants, the tendency of the people to practise Popish rites in spite of their nominal adherence to the Reformed faith. There is no more humiliating chapter in our country's legislation than those penal statutes against the down-trodden Romanists. But this spirit of intolerance was not confined

to Scotland; similar laws existed both in England and Ireland. When William III. came to the throne, it was thought necessary to pass an act in which the anti-Romish legislation of the last hundred and forty years should be condensed and concentrated. This statute, besides re-enacting the old severities, ordained that any one reputed to be a priest, and refusing to purge himself of Popery, should be banished the realm, and hanged if he returned; and that any one present at a meeting where there was an altar, an image, a mass-book, or a priestly vestment, should share the same fate. That the law might not lie dormant, a reward of five hundred merks was held out to every one who should apprehend a priest, or any devoted Romanist who gave a night's lodging to a priest. No Papist was to be allowed to educate his own children; no Papist could purchase an acre of land or a house to shelter himself; no Papist could succeed to any property or money which his nearest relative might wish to leave him; no Papist could be employed as a domestic servant. They were to be a proscribed and outcast race, denied not only the rights of fellow-citizens, but the charity which is generally extended to the most worthless of our fellow-creatures. William of Orange, notwithstanding his tolerant principles, put his name to this act.

Gradually a milder spirit grew up. British statesmen began to be ashamed of such laws. In 1777 the penal statutes against the Irish Catholics were repealed. In 1778 the same tardy justice was given to the English Catholics. All parties in the legislature vied with each other in giving to the measure an almost triumphal progress. The Opposition joined with the Ministry; the old Whigs coalesced with the Tories; the Bench of Bishops gave the weight of their learning, their gravity, and their known zeal for the Protestant religion; and the bill was carried through both Houses by overwhelming majorities. But Scotland beheld all this with alarm. It was known that, when the parliament again met, it was intended to extend the same principles of toleration to the north of the Tweed; and unfortunately an illiberal spirit was evoked.

When the General Assembly met in May 1778, the bill for repealing the penal laws in England had passed the House of Commons, and was certain to pass the House of Lords. As the measure might be extended to Scotland before the Assembly again met, it was moved that the Commission should be especially instructed to watch over the matter, and to oppose by every means in its power the extension of the toleration beyond the Tweed. The first trial of strength in this conflict resulted in the triumph of liberal principles. After a long debate, the motion was thrown out by a hundred and eighteen votes against twenty-four.*

This issue must be attributed in a great measure to the influence and eloquence of Principal Robertson. He sympathized with the Romanists, and wished them emancipated from civil penalties imposed because of their religious convictions. At first, however, he hesitated as to the course he should pursue. He was afraid lest the promoters of the measure might grant too much; he was afraid the country was not yet ripe for the change. But the bill itself, and the perfect unanimity with which it was carried, removed all his apprehensions. No political power, he observed, was conferred upon the Papist. He did not acquire the privileges of a citizen: he was merely restored to the rights of a man. He could not be a member of the meanest corporation, he could not sit in parliament; but he might henceforward acquire property by purchase or inheritance, and transmit it to others; and, under certain restrictions, he might celebrate his own worship without molestation. This was the small measure of justice which the parliament had granted to the English Catholics; and small though it was, no Catholic could take advantage of it till he took the oath of allegiance, abjured the Pretender, and renounced as impious the principles that heretics may be murdered, that faith is not to be kept with them, that the Pope can dispense with the obligation of an oath, depose princes, or exercise temporal jurisdiction within the realm. Convinced that such a repeal of the penal statutes was required, not only by political expediency, but by the humane spirit of

* Scots Magazine, vol. xl. pp. 269, 270.

the gospel, Principal Robertson was anxious that the benefit of it should be extended to the Roman Catholics in Scotland.*

He soon saw, however, that he had mistaken the temper of the times, and imagined his countrymen more enlightened and liberal than they were. When the parliament met toward the end of 1778, and a bill was brought in for repealing the penal statutes in Scotland, the country rose up against it almost as one man. The Established Church, the Secession Church, the Relief Church, joined in the cry. Synods, presbyteries, kirk-sessions, passed resolutions and despatched petitions against the obnoxious bill. Town-councils, guilds, corporations, clubs, societies, joined hand in hand to keep the Papists down. The remotest districts of the north caught the infection, and joined in the clamour. The Incorporation of Cordiners in Potterrow, the Seven United Trades of Montrose, the Porters in Edinburgh, the Berean Chapel, Carrubber's Close, the Society of St Crispin, the Society of Journeymen Staymakers, the Coal-hewers in and about Carntine, the Friendly Society of Gardeners, butchers, sailors, flax-dressers, weavers, masons, all vied with each other in expressing their abhorrence of the proposed repeal. Seventy-nine ecclesiastical courts, two counties, forty-one burghs, twenty-four towns, eighty-four parishes, fifty-five corporations, and seventy-one private societies, recorded their hostility to the measure, as fraught with ruin to the interests of the Protestant religion.†

It is curious to find that almost all the resolutions passed, and all the petitions framed to keep the Papists from being allowed to celebrate their own worship and to hold property, strongly repudiate persecuting principles. Though a priest was imprisoned or banished for saying a mass, he was not persecuted! Though a Papist was deprived of a rich legacy which a near relative had bequeathed him, he was not

* See Principal Robertson's Speech in the Assembly of 1779. It is given at great length in the Scots Magazine, and an abbreviation of it is given in Stewart's Life of Robertson. It is a very fine specimen of calm, dignified eloquence, quite worthy of the historian of Charles V.

† All these addresses, declarations, and resolutions were collected and published in an octavo volume of 356 pages, entitled "Scotland's Opposition to the Popish Bill." It is a curious monument of the time.

persecuted! Though a Roman mother might see her children taken from her to be educated in a religion which she devoutly believed would lead them to perdition, she was not persecuted! The Roman Catholics at that time held a position in Scotland similar to what slaves now hold in America—they were not recognised by the law at all, unless to be imprisoned, banished, and hanged; and yet it was thought that they were not the subjects of persecution!

Yet it were wrong to impute this intolerant spirit to cruelty, or even to bigotry. It was in a great measure the result of fear. Men not yet forgetful of the past history of Romanism dreaded the consequences of allowing Romanists to escape from the terror of the pillory, the jail, and the gibbet. They fancied their Protestant institutions thrown down, their wives and families at the mercy of sensual priests, and their civil liberties handed over to the Pope. Their fears were increased by exaggerated statements; they were gravely told that the object of the bill was to give to Papists a full right of acquiring all the landed property in the kingdom! *

The excitement increased day by day, and on the 2d of February 1789 the Edinburgh mob proceeded to acts of violence. A chapel had been recently erected in Leith Wynd, and, according to rumour, it was about to be adorned with the altars and images of the Romish superstition. The rabble set it on fire, and burned it to the ground. The next day they plundered a library belonging to Bishop Hay, rifled an old Popish chapel attached to his house, and bringing out the sacred furniture to the street, made a bonfire of it. All this time the magistrates did nothing, and the city was at the mercy of the mob. Not satisfied with insulting and pillaging Papists, they began to vent their fury upon those Protestant gentlemen who were known to favour the repeal of the penal laws. Principal Robertson was especially obnoxious; anonymous letters, full of insults and threats, were poured in upon him, and for some days his house at the College required to be guarded by the military. A troop of dragoons at length dispersed the rioters and restored order;

* Scotland's Opposition to the Popish Bill.

but the infection had spread, and a week afterwards outrages of a similar kind began to be committed in Glasgow. The mob gathered, forced the shop of a Papist, and destroyed his goods; but, happily, they were not allowed to proceed farther. These No-Popery riots were justly thought to bring deep disgrace upon Scotland; but the much more dreadful riots which occurred in London a year afterwards, under a similar excitement, threw the Edinburgh and Glasgow outbreaks into quick forgetfulness.

While the subject of Catholic emancipation was still agitating the public mind, Dr Erskine, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, and one of the leaders of the Popular party in the Church, forwarded to Edmund Burke, by whom the bill for the relief of the Roman Catholics had been introduced into parliament, a number of printed papers and sermons, containing the substance of the arguments which had been urged in Scotland against it. Burke's reply was perfectly respectful, but very cutting. "I am, by choice," said he, "and by taste, as well as by education, a very attached member of the Church of England; but it is as far from my wish as I thank God it is from my power to persecute you, who probably differ from me in a great many points. I wish it were equally out of my power to persecute any Roman Catholic. I keep, at the same time, very just weights and measures; and as I do not take my ideas of the Churches of France and of Italy from the pulpits of Edinburgh, so I shall most certainly not apply to the Consistory at Rome or to the Sorbonne at Paris for the doctrines and genius of the Church of Scotland."*

When the Assembly met in May, the subject was resumed. Seldom had that high court heard a more powerful or brilliant debate. Mr Stevenson of St Madoes, an able man, an eloquent speaker, and the steady advocate of popular rights, urged the hazard of emancipating the Catholics from the rigours of the penal laws. Principal Robertson, in a speech of more than usual ability, argued that all such fears were unfounded. The proposed bill, he said, conferred upon the Papists no political power. They could not hold any public

* Sir Henry Moncreiff's Life of Erskine.

office. They were not put in possession of the franchise. They were merely relieved from a state of proscription, and rendered capable of procuring, holding, and disposing of property. These concessions, small as they were, were to be granted only under restrictions which made them doubly safe. "But," said Dr Robertson, "in legislation, the sentiments of the people for whom the laws are made should be attended to with care. One of the wisest men of antiquity declared, that he had framed for his fellow-citizens not the best laws, but the best laws which they could bear. The Divine Legislator himself, accommodating His dispensations to the frailty of His subjects, gave to the Israelites, for a season, *statutes which were not good.* Even the prejudices of the people were respectable; and in their present excited mood they required to be soothed rather than irritated." "Impressed with these feelings," he continued, "I represented to the government the alarm which had spread among all classes of the people, and that nothing but the relinquishing the bill would calm and appease it. I thought the procuring relief to a handful of Roman Catholics was not to be balanced against the offence that would be given to the whole country, and therefore sacrificed my own private sentiments to the public good."*

The discussion was deprived of part of its interest by the fact that the government had intimated their resolution to withdraw the bill. The motion which was carried declared that the repeal of the penal laws would be inexpedient and dangerous; that the abandonment of the bill was a cause of gratulation; but that the lawless violence of the mob had been a source of shame and distress.

The subject of pluralities now began to trouble the Church. Up to this time there was no act of Assembly expressly prohibiting pluralities, though there were many acts forbidding ministers to meddle with secular affairs. They were not to be Senators of the College of Justice; they were not to be members of parliament; they were not to keep taverns; they were not to be major-domos. But during the regency

* This debate will be found reported at great length in the forty-first volume of the Scots Magazine.

of Morton and the minority of James, one clergyman had frequently held half a dozen parishes, with readers in place of curates stationed in each; and neither the statute law nor the practice of the Church hindered a professorship being conjoined with a parish. At this very time Hugh Blair held the chair of Rhetoric in the University of Edinburgh, with the pulpit of the High Church; and Robertson was Principal in the University, and a minister in the city. But the feelings of some began to revolt against such alliances. Toward the end of 1779, GEORGE HILL, Professor of Greek in the University of St Andrews, was presented to one of the churches in the town. One man, and one man only, in the presbytery opposed his induction; but the Synod of Fife and the Synod of Stirling and Perth sent up overtures to the ensuing Assembly in regard to such a union of offices. The Assembly referred the overtures to a committee, and the committee recommended they should be dismissed, and dismissed they were. The Church was not yet ripe for the Plurality controversy; and so Professor Hill became a pluralist with few to find fault.*

The Assembly of 1780 was the last in which Principal Robertson ever sat. While his strength was unbroken, and his influence apparently greater than ever, he resolved to withdraw himself from the management of ecclesiastical affairs. It was like his own Charles V. retiring from a throne to a monastery. Ever since the day of his first appearance in the Assembly his influence had steadily grown, and for the last twenty years he was the Dictator of the Church. It was known as "the period of Robertson's administration;" and though this administration was based upon nothing but the greatness of his name and the persuasiveness of his speeches, it was more stable than many administrations which bristle with bayonets or glitter with bribes. Till Robertson's time, the government had frequently dictated to the leaders of the Church the policy they should pursue; but Robertson uniformly resisted such interference. He was resolved to be independent, though he was resolved to support the existing order of things. He set two great

* Dr Cook's Life of Dr Hill. Scots Magazine, 1780.

objects before him—to strengthen patronage, and improve the criminal procedure of the Church. He succeeded in both. He found the call competing with the presentation; he left it stripped of its ancient power. He found the presbyteries mutinous; and he left them thoroughly subdued. He found the Assembly guided by no precedents, and bound by no rule, in the prosecution of offenders; he insisted upon the same strictness as was observed in the other Courts of Justice, and left behind him a series of decisions which were long venerated as a kind of common law in the Church.*

Robertson's management of ecclesiastical affairs never interrupted his literary labours. His "History of Scotland" was followed by his "History of Charles V.;" and his "History of Charles V." by his "History of America." Every new work added to his former fame; and critics disputed then, as they do now, whether Robertson or Hume should bear the palm. Gibbon, too, was just entering the historical field, declaring that his highest ambition was to write as Robertson had done. These three names still shine among the greatest luminaries in the literary firmament. That he might devote himself entirely to his historical toils, was the reason which Robertson assigned for retiring from the Assemblies; but it is probable that other motives mingled with this. Is it absurd to suppose that the same motives which led the emperor to retire from the great stage upon which he played so conspicuous a part may have influenced his historian? † Mighty men and mean men are subject to the same feelings, and guided by the same laws. But Sir Henry Moncreiff tells us of another reason which weighed with him. Some of his friends were anxious for an abolition of the Tests. They importuned him to assist them. He resisted their solicitations; but, teased and fretted by them, and dreading that the storm was coming, he was con-

* Principal Hill's Sketch of Robertson's Policy.

† The chief motive with Charles V. seems to have been a desire, after a busy and bustling life, to spend his old age in ease and retirement. The emperor, however, was broken down in health, whereas the historian was still in full mental and physical vigour.

firmed in a resolution he had already formed to retire. He ventured to predict that the propriety of formulas of faith would become the great question of the following age.* Facts have not yet fulfilled his prophecy; but perhaps the time is not yet. It is certain that at the present day many are weary of systems and symbols, and long for a return to the pure evangelism of the Gospels.

After his retreat from the Assembly, Dr Robertson continued to employ his time in the discharge of his ministerial duties, and in correcting and improving his historical works. The lustre of his name, the amiability of his dispositions, and the pleasing tone of his conversation, drew a numerous circle of admirers around him. He is described as having been rather above the middle height; his features were regular, though not handsome; his complexion was dark; and his eye spoke of good-humour as well as good-sense. Lord Cockburn, when a boy, frequently saw him in his old age, and describes him as "a pleasant-looking old man, with an eye of great vivacity and intelligence, a large projecting chin, a small hearing trumpet fastened by a black ribbon to a button-hole of his coat, and a rather large wig, powdered and curled." But the veteran historian, though old and deaf, could still find pleasure in joining the boys at their play, help them to herd their rabbits as they frisked on the green, or give them a feast of cherries from his favourite tree. In the spring of 1793 he knew that his end was approaching. He was at this time residing at Grange House, near Edinburgh, and in his daily visits to the garden would anxiously watch the progress of the blossom on the trees, and would perhaps with a quiet smile allude to the strange interest he felt in the opening of the flower, considering the event which was to happen before it was ripened into fruit. He breathed his last on the 11th of June.† Though not the best minister, or even the greatest man, he is, beyond all comparison, the most elegant writer the Church of Scotland has produced. When he was laid in his grave, the rancour of party was stifled by the universal grief; and

* See Appendix to Stewart's Life of Robertson.

† Stewart's Life and Writings of Robertson.

ecclesiastical enemies joined in celebrating his obsequies, and preaching funeral sermons in his praise.*

Principal Robertson had no sooner withdrawn from the Assembly than the Anti-patronage party gave symptoms of new life. Now that Achilles had left the field, they thought that victory was not impossible. Another circumstance conspired to the same result. In 1780 two or three peculiarly obnoxious settlements took place. Both at Biggar and at Fenwick ministers were placed, though not a single name was attached to their call. The people did not, as of old, oppose the intruder—they simply withheld their signatures; but the presbyteries were at a loss as to whether they could proceed with no call whatever. The Assembly ordered them to proceed. This raised the old spirit of resistance, and made many ask if the call was merely meant to be a mockery.†

In 1781, there were overtures touching patronage laid before the Assembly by three different synods. That of Glasgow and Ayr was the boldest. It was to the effect, that no call should be sustained unless signed by a majority of the heritors, elders, and communicants of the parish. The Assembly dismissed this proposal as incompetent, and of a dangerous tendency. The Synod of Dumfries and the Synod of Perth and Stirling overtured the Assembly to say what was meant by a call; but these overtures met with no more favour than the first.‡

In 1782 the synods returned to the charge. Perth and Stirling, Glasgow and Ayr, Fife, Galloway, Lothian and Tweeddale had joined hand in hand. They represented that several presbyteries had recently proceeded to the induction of ministers without the moderation of a call, and prayed the Assembly to prohibit such a thing in the future. Dr George Hill, now recognised as the leader of the Moderate party, rose up to oppose the prayer of the overtures. He was a tall, dark-visaged man, with a serious yet mild expres-

* Dr Erskine's Sermon on the Death of his Colleague is very honourable to both. They were opposed on all the great questions of the day, but the passions of faction were forgotten by the side of the grave.

† See the Appendix to the Patronage Report; also the Scots Magazine.

‡ Scots Magazine, vol. xliii. p. 273.

sion of face. His voice was peculiarly soft and melodious, and he managed it with the ease of an accomplished rhetorician. He had little gesticulation, but his tones gave expression and meaning to his words. He did not so much argue or debate, as give a clear exposition of the views which he held. In lucid statement, he was unrivalled. He made luminous every subject which he touched; and though he never powerfully affected the House, he very generally managed to carry it along with him. He began by remarking that the Assembly might very properly dismiss the overtures at once, but that a resolution so simple might be misrepresented; and therefore, to quiet the minds of the people, and prevent any turbulent persons from spreading an opinion that the Church was departing from its Presbyterian principles, he moved that the Assembly should declare that the moderation of a call was agreeable to the immemorial practice of the Church, but not having had sufficient evidence laid before them that any presbyteries had departed from this custom, should dismiss the overtures as unnecessary.*

This motion was far from satisfying the Popular party. Then up rose another chief of the Moderate host. It was Dr Macknight. He was minister of the Old Church of Edinburgh. He had already published his "Harmony of the Gospels," and his "Truth of the Gospel History;" and was afterwards still farther to enrich the theological literature of his country by his "Translation of the Apostolical Epistles, with a Commentary and Notes"—a noble monument of solid learning and solid sense. He was a big, bony man, awkward in his gait, threadbare in his garments, and formidable in his many-tired wig.† Perhaps he was slightly jealous of the pre-eminence to which the more plausible and smooth-speaking Dr Hill had attained; perhaps he wished to unite parties. He moved that the resolution of the court should be—"The Assembly, having considered overtures, declare that the moderation of a call in settling ministers is agreeable to the immemorial practice of the Church, and ought to be continued." The Anti-patronage men joined

* Cook's Life of Dr Hill. † Cockburn's Memorials.

with the Moderates who rallied round Macknight, and carried this motion. But it was very little that they gained. The form of moderating in a call was to be continued; but what was to constitute a call, or what was to be the result if no call were given, was left undefined.*

When the month of May 1783 revolved, the redoubtable Synods of Perth and Stirling, and Fife, were again in the field. Perth and Stirling, ever since it had cast out Erskine, had been trying to atone for its crime. Fife seemed to have inherited the spirit of the Melvilles, and never abandoned the Popular cause. They begged the Assembly to use its best efforts to have the Act of 1712 repealed, and the Act of 1690 restored. The Moderates wished to throw out the overtures at once. The Anti-patronage men proposed that presbyteries should be instructed to consult with the landed gentry within their bounds, and report the result to the next Assembly. It was said that Scotchmen were naturally averse to patronage; that the experience of seventy years proved this aversion to be invincible; that the Church showed its opinion by the annual instruction it gave to its Commission to watch for an opportunity for the removal of the grievance; and that no proposal could be more temperate than that which had been made, as it respected the wishes of the proprietors of the country. By nine votes only was this proposition thrown out.†

While this controversy was raging, a pamphlet appeared from the pen of Dr Hardy, minister of Ballingray, afterwards Professor of Church History in the University of Edinburgh, and one of the ablest and most honest men in the Church. He belonged to the Moderate party, but his pamphlet was in the form of a letter addressed to the clergy of the Popular interest.‡ His object was to effect a union, founded upon a compromise. He frankly confessed the enormous evils to which patronage had led. He acknowledged that the aver-

* Scots Magazine, vol. xliv. p. 330. Cook's Life of Dr Hill.

† Scots Magazine, vol. xlv. p. 330.

‡ It is entitled "The Principles of Moderation, addressed to the Clergy of the Popular interest in the Church of Scotland, by Thomas Hardy, Minister of Ballingray." It was reprinted in 1842.

sion of the people to it seemed to be invincible. Still it was the law; and so long as it remained the law, he and his friends would yield implicit obedience to it. But the law might be altered, not by the Assembly, but the parliament. In fact, such was the posture of affairs, "that either the Act of Queen Anne or the Church of Scotland must go: they could not stand together." He therefore proposed that the repeal of the Act 1712 should be sought, and a measure based upon the principle of the Act of Assembly 1732 substituted in its place. The choice of a minister, he argued, might be safely intrusted to the patron, a delegate from the heritors, and a delegate from the kirk-session. The pamphlet was read and admired; but neither party embraced its views, and the contest continued.

In 1784 the indomitable Synod of Perth and Stirling again approached the Assembly, praying for the removal of patronage. The Synod of Glasgow and Ayr stood by its side. It was moved, that the landed interest should be consulted as to what they would advise to remedy the evil. But the Moderates, worried by these incessant attacks, waxed angry, and carried a motion to the effect, that the overtures should "be rejected as inexpedient, ill-founded, and dangerous to the peace and welfare of the Church." Having struck this blow, they resolved to strike another. For forty years the Commission had been annually instructed by the Assembly to seize upon any convenient season that might occur to petition for the redress of the grievance of patronage. During the whole administration of Robertson it had been done. It had become but a form; but still, even in the form there was a memorial of principles once held and earnestly contended for. It was like some of those customs in feudal investiture, which, amid pageantry and despotism, recall the memory of primitive manners and restricted power. The clause was now struck from the instructions given to the Commission. Patronage was not to be regarded as a grievance.*

Notwithstanding these discouragements, yet once more the Synod of Perth and Stirling advanced to the assault.

* Scots Magazine, vol. xlvi. pp. 277, 278.

The Presbyteries of Dumfries and Kirkcudbright ranged themselves by its side. They begged the Assembly of 1785 to consult the proprietary of the country in regard to a repeal or alteration of the law of patronage. Again the orators on both sides trod a field which had so often been trodden before. "The overtures now under deliberation," said Webster of Inverarity, "have two different objects in view: the one, that we should consult the landed interest how far they would agree to an alteration or mitigation of the law of patronage; the other, that we should endeavour to have this law repealed, and the Act of 1690 substituted in its place. Sir, I am against consulting—I am against attempting a repeal. Even were the overtures unexceptionable by being explicit, I should yet be against consulting the gentlemen of landed property. Do they feel the grievance of patronage? It is surely as much their business to apply to us, as our duty to consult with them. They are clear enough sighted in their own interests, and they would smile at the supposed wisdom which pointed out rights to which they were inattentive. I am equally against attempting any repeal of the existing law. Were my opinions in church-government directed by a vain desire of increasing the power of the order to which I have the honour to belong, I confess, sir, this is an alteration for which I would most earnestly contend; because I am convinced that the Act of 1690 is the cause of the clergy, not the cause of the people. Were a majority of heritors and elders to have the right of election, the power of heritors would diminish in proportion to the extent of their property, and the influence of the clergy increase according to the degree of their popularity. In general, they would gain the direction of kirk-sessions, and acquire an influence in the appointment of ministers which they do not now possess. Every sensible man must be convinced, and every honest man will confess, that the law of patronage has been attended with some grievances; but I have heard of no other mode of appointing ministers that could remedy these grievances. I have heard of no alteration that would not be attended with grievances greater still. If, then, it is

the part of a wise and good man of two evils to choose the least, from a regard to duty and the peace of my country I am bound to vote for the dismission of these overtures."*

Among the speakers on the opposite side was the Honourable Henry Erskine, the wit of the Parliament-house, the idol of his friends, and one of the ablest lawyers of his day. "The motion to dismiss the overtures," he remarked, "ought not to have come from the men who made it; as their argument tended to this, that if the overtures were adopted, they would put an end to all the murmurings, noise, and complaints with which they were pestered year after year in regard to their beloved patronage. The friends of the overtures had in effect pledged themselves, that if the landed interest should declare against any alteration of the law as it stood, they would give up the contest for ever. The other side had said that the gentlemen of the country would scout the proposition if presented to them; or, if they paid any attention to it, would, as a man, reject it. Why, then, refuse to make a trial, where success is so certain? Are you unwilling to let the other side die in peace—a death, too, inflicted by their own hands? Or are you so captivated by their eloquence in exhibiting the direful effects of patronage that you wish to have it eternally repeated? Gentlemen have pleaded in favour of the ancient rights of patrons; and how old are these rights? As old as the Tory ministry of Queen Anne, who wished to exclude the family of Hanover. Can men pretending to be Whigs be so very fond of a Tory brat?"† The overtures were thrown out by a large majority.

From this period the controversy began to abate. Even the Synod of Perth and Stirling ceased to overture. The majorities of the Moderates were increasing; the cause of the Popular party seemed utterly desperate. They laid down their arms, and passed under the yoke. The Church again had peace. In 1787 there was a transient outburst of the old feeling, caused by the patronage of St Ninian's being advertised for sale during a vacancy in the parish. Every

* I have here abridged the speech as given in the Scots Magazine.

† Scots Magazine, vol. xlvii. p. 244.

English newspaper contains advertisements of patronages offered for sale; and every conceivable allurement is temptingly spread out before the eyes of clerical gentlemen who have money to buy. The present incumbent is old and ready to die; the parish is in a county where a pack of fox-hounds is kept; the living is large, and the duties are small. But in England no patronage can be sold during a vacancy. Such a thing was now to be done in Scotland, and the country was scandalized. Three synods appeared before the Assembly, and said that such occurrences would introduce barefaced simony. The leaders of the Moderate party rose up, and rivalled the leaders of the Popular party in declaring their abhorrence of simoniacal pactions; and then the Assembly, with perfect unanimity, entered upon its records a resolution condemning simony, and appointed a committee to revise the laws concerning it.* Next year the subject was again brought up, and strong speeches made in reprobation of a practice so shameful as the reintroduction of money-changers into the temple; but nothing was done, and the sore evil remained uncured.†

A.D. 1780–90. This decade witnessed one of those strange religious impostures which occasionally fill the world with wonder, and show to what a length human credulity will go. A dissolute woman, named Mrs Buchan, managed by flattery and fanatical cant to cajole the Reverend Hugh White, minister of the Relief Church at Irvine, into the belief that she was the Third Person in the Godhead. He was deposed from the ministry on account of the blasphemous creed which he had adopted, but he was not left without friends. Several of the inhabitants of Irvine, some of them of good education and respectable position, gathered around the saintly prostitute and her clerical convert. "Lucky Buchan," as she was generally called, now gave out that she was not only the Holy Ghost, but the woman spoken of in the Revelation of John as clothed with the sun, and with the moon under her feet; and that the man-child of whom she had been delivered, and who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron, was no other than Hugh White. She more-

* Scots Magazine, vol. xlix. p. 256. † Ibid. vol. l. p. 305.

over pretended to confer inspiration and immortality upon all her followers by breathing upon them, which she accompanied with postures and practices grossly indecent. The people of Irvine could not tolerate in their midst a community speaking such blasphemies and committing such impurities, and they drove them out.

The Buchanites left Irvine as Lot and his family left the cities of the plain—believing it would shortly be consumed by fire for having rejected them. Driven out into the wilderness they kept their faces toward the east, where they believed their Lord was to appear. Some of the pilgrims were in carts, some on horses, some on foot. A few had the dress and manners of educated people, but the great majority were in the garb of the Scottish peasantry. The women had their heads bare and their coats kilted; and all their little property was contained in a bundle, wrapped in a handkerchief, and tied round their waist. Wherever they went the people stared at them with wonder, or fled at their approach; for they believed that nothing but witchcraft could lead men and women to leave property and friends, forget all the decencies of life, and listen to the disordered ravings of an abandoned woman, and who looked so like a witch, as she sat in the front of a cart, dressed in a scarlet cloak, sometimes chattering passages of Scripture, and sometimes smoking a pipe of tobacco. As they journeyed along, they sang in full chorus hymns composed by White, and set to ballad-tunes.

At length they found a habitation at New Cample, in Nithsdale. At first a barn was their only shelter; but they subsequently built a wooden house for their accommodation, which was immediately called by the people "Buchan Ha'." They were about sixty in number. They had all things in common, even their women; for marriage they held to be a carnal ordinance, abolished by the gospel. It was devilish to think, said they, that merely refraining from woman and certain meats constituted salvation. The children in the society were separated from their mothers, and committed to a stranger to be brought up; but it was rumoured and believed that infanticide was practised, as it was certainly

recommended. There were some persons of property among the Buchanites; and upon the funds which they were able to supply all managed to live, though very meanly. They occasionally worked to the neighbouring farmers, but it was always gratuitously; and this gained them favour with the greedy. Almost every day the Man-child White preached; and Friend Mother, in whom was the light of God, generally added some remarks of her own. Crowds were at first drawn from the neighbourhood to witness these strange exhibitions; but in general the surrounding farmers and peasantry were disgusted with the profaneness of the new settlers; and on one occasion attacked their house, and would probably have murdered the witch-woman Buchan had they found her.

To make their doctrines known to the world, White published his "Divine Dictionary," which he pretended was given by inspiration of God. Its motto indicated its contents—"There appeared a great wonder in heaven—a woman." Though there is reason to suspect that some must have been drawn to the society by the licentious life which it encouraged, there is no reason to doubt but that others were thoroughly sincere. They fully believed they would never die; they lived in constant expectation of being translated to heaven to meet their Saviour. To prepare themselves the better for this, they undertook to fast for forty days. They bolted their doors; they shut their windows; they sung rapturous hymns; they tasted nothing but a little treacle and water, at long intervals; and it seems certain that several of them subsisted upon nothing but this for several weeks. Mother Buchan alone continued to take food, lest her body should become so transparent that her followers would not be able to behold the brightness of her countenance. She accordingly remained plump and rosy, while the other members of the community were worn away to skeletons. The magistrates, learning what was going on, at length interfered, to prevent the unhappy fanatics starving themselves to death. Thus violently stopped in their etherializing process, but already sufficiently attenuated, and, as they thought, spiritualized, they betook themselves to a little green hillock, whence

they might ascend to heaven. Friend Mother was raised upon a temporary platform above all her followers. They turned their faces toward the rising sun; they stretched their hands up to heaven, as if ready to fly; they chanted their Translation Songs. White had on his gloves and full canonicals. Some had left only a single tuft of hair on the crown of their heads, that by it the descending angels might get a hold of them. Still they clung to earth; and a gust of wind coming and overturning Mrs Buchan and her frail platform, instead of wafting her upwards, they all returned to their home disconsolate.

This foolish failure made many begin to doubt, and some fell away. The community were shortly afterwards compelled to remove from Dumfriesshire; but they found a refuge in Galloway, at a place called Auchengibbert. There Mother Buchan died; but a few of the initiated, to gull their companions, pretended that they had visibly seen her ascend to heaven after her death, and concealed the place of her burial. White and some others afterwards recanted their errors, and went to America; but a number held fast by their faith, continued to live as a community, and never abjured their opinions to the last.*

The Assembly of 1789 was violently agitated by the election of a successor to Dr Drysdale, its principal clerk. The candidates were Dr Carlyle of Inveresk, and Professor Dalziel. Party politics mingled largely in the fray. When the vote was taken, in a House unprecedentedly full, a majority of three appeared to be in favour of Carlyle. The confusion and uproar became so great that Principal Hill, who was Moderator, was compelled to adjourn the Assembly, and leave the chair. A scrutiny was demanded. Every name on the roll was canvassed, every commission was reviewed with eyes eager to find flaws; and the result was that the scales were turned, and Dalziel declared to be elected by a few votes.†

* My information regarding the Buchanites is gathered from an interesting little book published not many years ago—"The Buchanites from First to Last," by Joseph Train.

† Cook's Life of Dr Hill. Scots Magazine, vol. i.

In 1790 there was a singular case from the Presbytery of Arbroath brought before the Assembly. Under the shadow of their venerable abbey, these presbyters gave collation to a minister without even the formality of a call, and without requiring him to subscribe the Confession of Faith. The Assembly unanimously censured them, and warned them to avoid such irregular procedure in the future.*

The Church was now called upon to deal with a heretic. Dr M'Gill, one of the ministers of Ayr, published in 1786 a work entitled, "A Practical Essay on the Death of Christ." The book had a bad aspect. It spoke of the sacrifice of Christ as being merely figurative; of repentance as the best atonement for sin; of good works as the best foundation for hope. It appeared to teach that God had not exacted from Christ the punishment due to our sins; and that His death was merely the highest possible act of obedience to the Divine will. In some respects it anticipated the teaching of Wright and Maurice, which has now taken so firm a hold on many minds.† The book was taken up by the presbytery. From the presbytery it passed to the synod. There was almost endless altercation about the meaning of words and the force of phrases. But deposition was inevitable, if some recantation were not made. The free-thinking Doctor thought it better to retract than to be deposed; and accordingly, in 1790, before the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr, he

* Scots Magazine, vol. li.

† The Essay is divided into two parts—the History and the Doctrine of the Death of Christ; and such sentiments as the following occur in it:—"Since punishment is a debt due to God, and cannot justly be exacted of an innocent person, who will say that Christ, who was most innocent, could be properly punished by God? Who will not rather acknowledge His death as a work of great obedience?" (P. 33.) "The Lord Jesus really possessed the same favour with God, now when hanging on the cross, as on those splendid occasions when He fed five thousand." (P. 165.) "God accepts of repentance and sincere obedience, instead of sinless perfection." (P. 252.) In the course of 1787, at least three answers were published. One was entitled "Socinianism Unmasked, &c., occasioned by Dr M'Gill's Practical Essay on the Death of Jesus Christ, proving that he denies the Great Doctrines of the Atonement and of the Deity of our Lord;" another was entitled "The Scripture Doctrine of Redemption," by James Moir, minister of Tarbolton; and a third was "A Sermon on the Reasons of our Lord's Agony in the Garden," by Mr Russel of Kilmarnock.

explained some of his expressions, retracted others, expressed his regret at having been led into error, and supplicated forgiveness. Forgiveness was accordingly extended to him. The matter was afterwards brought up to the Assembly; but it was almost unanimously thrown out, as adjudicated upon already.*

At this period the clergy had again matured a scheme for the augmentation of their stipends, and the Lord Advocate of the time had actually introduced a bill into parliament embodying their views; but he afterwards withdrew it, as many of the proprietors complained that they had not had time to study its provisions; and so the long-cherished scheme was again allowed to go to sleep, and many of the rural clergy made to feel that hope deferred which maketh the heart sick.

The French Revolution had now broken out. An ancient order of things was swept away in a day. A monarch, himself virtuous, though the inheritor of many vices, was foully murdered. The reign of terror was begun. The guillotine daily dripped with the best blood in the land. Religion was declared to be an imposture; the priests were driven from their altars; the churches were shut up. The worship of Reason was impiously inaugurated at Notre Dame. Society seemed to be dissolved. Different men were impressed differently by these amazing events. Some were made better, some were made worse. Some saw only atrocity, anarchy, and blood. Some thought they beheld the commencement of a new era, in which men, freed from kingcraft and priestcraft, would be perfectly happy and supremely wise. Some shuddered at the crimes which had been committed, but still hoped that out of the ruins of the old world a new and a better might yet be reconstructed. All were staggered, and waited the issue in suspense. One of the first results was, that Europe was plunged into a bloody war, and Britain unhappily whirled into the vortex.

One of the great defects of the Established Church of Scotland is its want of expansiveness. It cannot stretch

* The proceedings of the synod in this case were published in the form of a pamphlet. The proceedings of the Assembly will be found in the Scots Magazine.

itself out, so as to meet an increased population. If a new church is built, or a new parish endowed, it must be by the free-will offerings of the people. It is difficult to erect a new parish now; it was impossible in the last century. The law made no provision for such a contingency. Yet the population of the country was rapidly increasing. A small village became a large town, and one church could not contain the whole population. A coal-seam began to be worked, and a sooty society instantly sprang up where there was a perfect solitude before. A mill was built, and its machinery was no sooner in motion, with its deafening noise, than the hum of human voices was heard in its neighbourhood. In such cases, the parish church was probably at a distance. It would scarcely do to allow the miner or the spinner to sink into heathenism. Where there was Christian generosity, money was collected; the master gave his gold, the workman gave his silver; and proposals were laid before the presbytery to build a chapel and support a minister.

There were a few cases of a different kind, in which the erection of a chapel of ease was desired. Sometimes there was a reluctance to attend the ministry of an unwelcome presentee, and an equal reluctance to leave the Established Church. It was at first thought that the Relief might be a refuge for all such; but the Assembly had destroyed that notion. It was now thought that chapels of ease might be a remedy; and there were instances of people offering to build a house and maintain a minister within the pale of the Establishment, and thus dearly purchase exemption from patronage.

It was generally felt that the erection of chapels should be allowed, and even encouraged; but there was some difference of opinion as to the circumstances in which they should be allowed and encouraged. Where the parish church was crowded, and the entire population unable to find admission to it, or where there was a population with no church within miles, all were agreed upon the propriety of a chapel; but where the people were anxious for a chapel, not so much because the church was full or far away, as because the minister was unpopular, a difference of opinion

existed as to whether a chapel should be permitted. There were some who thought that no chapel should be sanctioned so long as there was an empty seat in the parish church; there were others who thought that, in the case of forced settlements, it was better there should be chapels in connection with the Church than meeting-houses arrayed against it.*

When there were such differences of opinion in regard to the circumstances in which chapels of ease should be sanctioned, it was seen that the court which had the power of granting the license would exercise an important influence upon the question. Should it be the presbytery or the General Assembly? Should every presbytery have the power of giving judgment in all cases within its bounds, subject to the review of the higher courts? or should the hands of the presbyteries be tied, and the General Assembly alone empowered to give a decision in such cases? The expediency of granting constitutions to chapels of ease was brought before the Assembly of 1795, and a committee appointed to consider the matter. In 1796 the committee gave in its report. It recommended that, when an application was made to a presbytery to authorize the erection of a chapel, the presbytery should cite all having interest; inquire into the circumstances upon which the petition was founded; learn the arrangements that were to be made for the erection of the building and the support of the minister; and then report the whole matter to the General Assembly, without pronouncing any judgment till specially instructed by the supreme judicatory.†

The only clause in this report which excited discussion was that which required presbyteries to report to the General Assembly without pronouncing any judgment. This was keenly opposed by the Popular party, headed by Dr Erskine and Sir Henry Moncreiff. They argued that the clause was an infringement of the constitution of the Church. It robbed the presbytery, the radical court of their Presbyterian Church, of its power to give judgment in the first

* Cook's Life of Dr Hill. Hetherington's History.

† Cook's Life of Dr Hill. Scots Magazine, vol. lviii.

instance, in every case occurring within its bounds. Why should presbyteries be stripped of the right of giving judgment in this case, which was accorded them in all other cases? Were they not most likely to be the best judges of circumstances which must be purely local? Or, if they did wrong, if any one felt himself aggrieved, was there not an appeal in the usual way to the synod and the General Assembly? Why suspend the usual order of things?

On the other side, it was argued by Dr Finlayson and Dr Hill, that the General Assembly, and not the presbytery, was the radical court of the Church. History, they said, proved this. The Reformation was no sooner completed than the General Assembly met. It was many years afterwards before a presbytery was known. It was not the presbyteries that created the General Assembly; it was the General Assembly that created the presbyteries. All their powers flowed from it; the limit of their jurisdiction was fixed by it. There was nothing unconstitutional, therefore, in the General Assembly reserving to itself the right of giving judgment in regard to the erection of chapels of ease. Prudence required that the General Assembly should reserve the right. Presbyteries might be swayed by local passions and local interests, and the Church be weakened by unnecessary division.*

These arguments prevailed; and, according to the provisions of the Barrier Act, the overture was sent down to the presbyteries for consideration. When the subject was thus thrown abroad, it excited a hundred controversies in place of one. The flame was divided, without being lessened. When the Assembly met in 1797, it was found that thirty-four presbyteries had disapproved of the overture, and only thirty had approved of it, so that it ought to have been held as rejected by the votes of the whole Church. But, by a large majority, the Assembly resolved to retransmit it to the presbyteries; and the new experiment so succeeded that a majority was obtained, and in 1798 the overture was passed into a law.†

* Cook's Life of Dr Hill.

† Cook's Life of Dr Hill. Scots Magazine, vol. lix. p. 430.

A missionary spirit now began to breathe over the Churches of the Reformation. The Apostolic Church was a Missionary Church. The Church of Rome, amidst her corruption, had never allowed her missionary zeal to die. Her missionaries had penetrated the forests of Germany; had landed on the shores of England; had preached the gospel to the piratical Danes, who invocated Odin with bloody sacrifices before they launched their barks upon the sea. Even amidst the alarms of the Reformation, Rome could spare her bravest and her best for the missionary work. Xavier, the friend of Loyola, went forth as the apostle of the Indies; and, after a life-long work, sunk down and died under the very wall of China. Protestantism, hitherto busied with its own inner arrangements, had been forgetful of the vast outer fields of heathenism; but now a new-born zeal began to appear. Carey had left his cobbler's stall to assail Brahminism; and the unlettered but thoughtful man gave the Bible in their native tongue to myriads of idolaters. The reports of the Baptist Missionary Society were everywhere read; and though many sneered at the fond enthusiasts and their Utopian work, others saw in these things the spring of a better day.

The wave touched the shores of Scotland, and broke upon it. A missionary society was formed at Glasgow; another at Edinburgh, at the first meeting of which Dr Erskine acted as president. His good name gave dignity and weight to everything with which he was connected. He was the friend and correspondent of Bishop Warburton. He was pronounced by Bishop Hurd to be, next to Warburton, the deepest divine he had ever known; but his reputation rested more upon his benevolence than his learning. There was nothing he would not do for the good of his kind. He was now an old man, thin, pale, and spectral-looking, greatly bent down by years, but evidently full of soul. Everybody loved and reverenced him.* He has the high honour of being among the first advocates of missions in the Church.

Two synods brought the subject of Foreign Missions

* Cockburn's Memorials.

under the notice of the Assembly of 1796. The Synod of Fife asked the Assembly to consider by what means the Church of Scotland might most effectually contribute to the diffusion of the gospel over the world. The Synod of Moray went farther, and suggested that collections should be made throughout the Church to assist missionary societies in propagating the gospel among heathen nations. The great majority of the congregated divines treated the project as purely chimerical. Who were they, that they should be able to turn the myriads of India from superstitions rooted so firmly in all their habits and thoughts? Let them make the attempt, and they would engraft upon the mind of the untutored Indian European vices, without European virtues. The missionaries, it was said, were vainly endeavouring to reverse the natural order of things. Civilisation must precede Christianity. It was in vain to Christianize the savage. His simple nature could not comprehend the mysteries of our faith. It was not to the savage hordes of Africa or India that Paul directed his footsteps, but to the polished cities of Corinth, of Athens, and of Rome. But why should they go so far for a field of labour? Was there nothing to do at home? Was there no heathenism at their own door? And would it not be worse than folly to spend their strength in India so long as a single unchristianized individual could be found in Scotland? In truth, the law forbade it, and would not suffer the collections which ought to be applied to the poor to be diverted into such a channel.

The most elaborate speech against missions was delivered by Mr Hamilton of Gladsmuir. When he had sat down, Dr Erskine rose. "Moderator, rax* me that Bible," said he. The Bible was handed to him, and the passage was read in which there is a narrative of Paul's reception, after shipwreck, on the island of Melita, "where the barbarous people showed him no little kindness," and marvelled when he shook the venomous adder from his hand unharmed. "Think you," said Dr Erskine, "that when Paul wrought his miracles at Melita, and was supposed to be a god, he did not also preach Christ to the barbarians, and explain whose name it

* Scotticism for "reach"—hand, give.

was through which such power was given unto men?"* Dr Erskine's striking appeal did not avail. The Assembly, by fifty-eight to forty-four, dismissed the overtures, but at the same time recommended to all the members of the Church, in their different stations, to take every competent method of promoting, within the sphere of their influence, the knowledge of the gospel, and a just sense of the inestimable blessings it conveyed. The last clause was designed to soften the harshness of the first. But the Assembly must not be too severely condemned. It simply gave utterance to the almost universal sentiments of the time—the sentiments of good people in England as well as in Scotland—the sentiments of Dissenters as well as Churchmen.† It was several years after this that Sydney Smith wrote for the "Edinburgh Review" his satires of Methodism and Missions—satires which are universally reprobated now, but which were greedily read and generally applauded then. The truth is, men could not believe the miracles which have since been wrought by missionary zeal. Mountains have been levelled, and a straight way has been made in the desert for the advent of the Prince of Peace; and, auguring the future from the past, we can now look forward to the time when every idol shall be broken, every false religion destroyed, and the whole world hail Jesus of Nazareth as its God and Saviour.

The Haldanes now began to move in the religious world. They were the sons of Captain James Haldane of Airthrie, a beautiful estate in the south of Perthshire, from which the most celebrated of Scottish spas takes its name, and close by which the villas, cottages, and churches of the Bridge of Allan now nestle warmly amid basaltic rocks and overhanging woods. Robert Haldane, the elder of the two, and already the possessor of his father's property, entered the navy, and fought with the future Lord St Vincent in the "Foudroyant." James Haldane, the younger brother, also

* Lives of Robert and James Haldane, pp. 134, 135.

† In 1796 the Antiburghers, in general synod, passed a resolution against missionary societies; and the Cameronians excommunicated one of their number for having attended a missionary sermon preached by Dr Balfour. See Lives of the Haldanes, p. 260.

went to sea, and quickly rose to be commander of the "Melville Castle" East-Indiaman. But both abandoned their profession; and both, about the same period, became deeply impressed with religious truth. Under the influence of this feeling, Robert resolved to sell his paternal estate, and conduct a mission to Bengal. In the great city of Benares, the capital of the Brahmin superstition, he proposed to pitch his tent and begin his work. He had fixed upon his associates: they were Dr Bogue of Gosport; Dr Innes, one of the ministers of Stirling; and Mr Greville Ewing, colleague of Dr Jones, minister of Lady Glenorchy's Chapel in Edinburgh. But the Court of Directors refused its concurrence, and Robert Haldane was obliged to abandon his design.

Just about the time when the Assembly of 1796 was bringing its labours to a close, Mr Simeon of Cambridge arrived in Edinburgh. His fame as a preacher and a good man had preceded him. He had travelled northwards in order to have a pleasure-tour in the Highlands; and James Haldane, whom he visited at Airthrie, agreed to accompany him. They visited Perth, Dunkeld, Killiecrankie, Blair, Taymouth, jogging along on horseback, and everywhere distributing religious tracts on the way. Simeon preached in some of the Scotch pulpits, and there were few who could preach like him; but, at the end of a few weeks, he returned back to his old quarters at Cambridge, and the memory of his visit alone remained. In the spring of 1797 James Haldane set out on a tour to the west of Scotland. His travelling companion on this occasion was John Campbell, who at that time kept an ironmonger's shop in the Grassmarket of Edinburgh, but afterwards acquired a wide celebrity as an African traveller and missionary. Their object was to establish Sabbath-schools, and disperse tracts. They dispersed some thousands of tracts, and established no fewer than sixty Sabbath-schools.*

From founding schools, and handing tracts to every one he met, James Haldane proceeded to preach. He first began at Gilmerton, a collier village in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, where he thought the gospel was not preached

* Lives of the Haldanes.

by the parish minister. Crowds naturally flocked to hear the sea-captain. Encouraged by the success of his effort at Gilmerton, the former captain of the "Melville Castle" proceeded to the north, accompanied by Mr John Aikman, then studying for the Church of Scotland, and who afterwards built from his own funds a chapel in Argyle Square, Edinburgh, lately bought by government for the Industrial Museum of Scotland. Wherever the itinerants came, they preached, taking their stand at the market-cross, or in the public street. Sometimes the town-bellman or the town-drummer gave notice to the inhabitants of where they were to hold forth. On the Sabbath-day they generally attended sermon in the parish church; but when dissatisfied with the doctrine of the minister, they arrested the people on their way homeward, and from the top of a stair, or at the corner of a street, denounced what they considered the dangerous errors which they had heard from the pulpit. This was but the first of a series of preaching-tours made by Haldane and his companions, in which they visited almost every town and village in Scotland, and assailed legal Christianity in its strongholds.

In the summer of 1798 Rowland Hill came to Scotland, on the invitation of the Haldanes, to open the Edinburgh Circus as a tabernacle. Not satisfied with preaching in the circus on the Sabbaths, the eccentric Englishman filled up the week with sermons preached in different parts of the country, sometimes in the open air, sometimes in the churches of the Establishment. His rollicking manner, his racy humour, the anecdotes he told, the oddity of the whole man, coupled with his evident earnestness, speedily drew crowds around him; and on one occasion he preached on the Calton Hill to nearly twenty thousand persons. His strange ways, however, gave offence to many. He scandalized the rigid Presbyterians by kneeling when he entered the pulpit; and he scandalized a family of Seceders with whom he was sojourning by praying for his horse, which had unfortunately become lame.*

When he returned to England he published a Journal of

* Memoir of the Rev. Rowland Hill, by William Jones.

his Scottish Tour, which was not very flattering to the spiritual pride of the nation. He passed in review the Established Church, and all the Dissenting Churches which had sprung from it. He charged them all with intolerance and bigotry. He declared that the Solemn League and Covenant was more persecuting than the Act of Uniformity. He alleged that the majority of the Established clergy did not preach the gospel; that they were moralists or infidels; that some of them preached a mangled gospel; others, a hungry system of bare-weight morality; others, a species of unbelief.

It will readily be believed that these things could not be said and done without exciting resentment. Few men can hear themselves reviled with perfect complacency. Few ministers could be expected to bear with itinerants coming into their parishes, catching their hearers as they came out of the church on a sacrament-Sabbath, or calling them together by tuck of drum and sound of bell, and solemnly assuring them that to them the gospel was not preached. The Haldanes were undoubtedly well-meaning men. The great sacrifices they made, the great toils they endured, prove how deep their convictions were. Let us honour them for their honesty, their disinterestedness, their entire self-devotedness; but while we thus honour them, we may doubt if their zeal did not sometimes make them forget that charity which is the bond of perfectness. Rowland Hill took his estimate of Scottish piety from the men with whom he associated, and gave it a colouring of his own.

The bad feeling which had been engendered in different parts of the country found vent in the Assembly of 1799. Many synods hastened to tell the Assembly of their grievances. The Assembly instantly passed an act to meet the emergency; and ordered a Pastoral Letter to be written and dispersed among the flock, to warn them of the danger to which they were exposed.* The Pastoral Letter contained

* The following is a paragraph from the Pastoral Letter:—

"It is much to be lamented, that while we are assaulted by false principles imparted to us from abroad, there should of late have arisen among ourselves a set of men whose proceedings threaten no small disorder to the country. We mean those who, assuming the name of missionaries from what they call

sentiments about Sabbath-schools which are now universally abandoned, and threw reflections upon the Haldanes which were not deserved. The act of Assembly consisted of two parts. By the first, it was declared that none but licentiates of the Church of Scotland were capable of receiving a presentation to any parish within its bounds. Previous to this time there had been many instances of licentiates of other Churches receiving livings in the Church of Scotland. This was felt to be a hardship by the regular licentiates of the Church, who had passed through the prescribed university education; and it was to be permitted no more. Few will challenge the wisdom of the measure, as no Church in the world places the licentiates of other religious bodies on a level with its own.

the Society for Propagating the Gospel at Home, as if they had some special commission from Heaven, are at present going through the land, not confining themselves to particular stations, but acting as universal itinerant teachers, and as superintendents of those who are established the teachers of religion by the Church; intruding themselves into their parishes without any call; erecting in several places Sunday-schools, without any countenance from the presbytery of the bounds, the minister or heritors of the parish; committing in these schools the religious instruction of youth to ignorant persons, altogether unfit for such an important charge, who presume not only to catechize, but to expound the Scriptures, or to persons notoriously disaffected to the civil constitution of the country; and connecting these schools with certain secret meetings, in which, as we are informed, every person is bound not to spread abroad anything that is said or done in the meeting, to the prejudice of any of the members, into which no person is admitted without the consent of the whole of the members, or which keep a correspondence with other societies in the neighbourhood. You see the men who, by themselves or their associates, conduct those Sunday-schools and secret meetings, bringing together assemblies of people in the fields, or in places not intended for public worship, where, pouring forth their loose harangues, they frequently take the liberty of censuring the character or the doctrine of the minister of the parish, studying to alienate the affections of the people from their own pastors, and engaging them to join this new sect, as if they alone were possessed of some secret and novel method of bringing men to heaven." This Pastoral, written under the irritation of the Haldanes' preaching and Rowland Hill's Journal, is said to be from the pen of Dr Blair.

This Assembly also appointed a committee to report "concerning vagrant teachers and Sunday-schools." The committee in their report quoted the different acts of parliament and Assembly which placed all teachers of truth under the supervision of the Church; and recommended the Assembly to enjoin presbyteries to be diligent in putting the law in force, and to instruct the procurator to give them his assistance in carrying on necessary processes. See Acts of Assembly, pp. 870–75.

The other part of the act prohibited the ministers of the Church from employing any to preach in their pulpits besides the authorized licentiates and ministers of the Church, or from holding ministerial communion with any such persons.

This part of the act has very generally been condemned, as unlike the liberality of the apostolic age—as unlike the catholicity of all the Protestant Churches immediately after the Reformation. It is notorious that the act pointed at the Haldanes, and at Rowland Hill. Let us look at it in that light. The former were laymen; the latter an ordained priest of the Church of England. Is lay preaching apostolic? Those who remember how the disciples who were scattered by the persecution which arose at Jerusalem went everywhere preaching the Word, may be inclined to think that it is. But is this any good reason why the pulpits of an Established Church, which requires a regular training for all its licentiates, and a subscription to a special creed in all its ministers, should be thrown open to every layman who fancies he has a call to preach? If the pulpits of the Church of Scotland are to be thrown open to such men, what need of having licentiates at all, fettered by creeds and trained in the schools? If laymen will preach, let them preach. They will find some place for an audience, if they can find an audience for the place, without intruding into the church. Let the church and the pulpit be sacred to the clergy, the expounders of a recognised creed, and the people will have confidence in the man and his doctrine. It is but justice to the Haldanes to say that they never even asked admission to the parish churches, though others, less worthy, have since both asked and received.

But Rowland Hill was an ordained presbyter of the Church of England: Should he have been excluded from the pulpits of the Church of Scotland? Should every Church be a close corporation? It is certain that this is the policy of almost all Churches now; but it was not always so. John Knox preached in English as well as in Genevese pulpits; but a descendant of John Knox would find access to neither the one nor the other. George Whitefield and Rowland Hill were welcomed within many of the churches of

the Scotch Establishment; but after that the door was closed and barred. It was so everywhere. Rowland Hill pungently spoke the truth when he said, that if St Paul were to appear again upon earth, he would be refused admittance to his own cathedral. In the case of Scotland, however, it was temporary irritation that created the exclusion. Rowland Hill came to Scotland as the associate of the Haldanes; and the Haldanes had made themselves odious by their denunciations of the lukewarmness, legalism, and infidelity of the Established clergy. Rowland Hill returned to England to publish grievous charges against the Church whose pulpits he had been generously permitted to occupy. No man will allow a calumniator to visit his house a second time.

The Established Church did not stand alone in its antagonism to Rowland Hill and the Haldanes. In 1798 the Antiburgher Synod forbade its people "to attend or give countenance to public preaching by any who were not of their communion;" and a year afterwards actually deposed and excommunicated one of its ministers for having heard Rowland Hill and James Haldane preach. The Synod of Relief, forgetting that Gillespie, its founder, had finished his education in Dr Doddridge's Academy, and received ordination from an English presbytery, forgetting the principles of free communion which it had always cherished, ordained "that no minister should give or allow his pulpit to be given to any person who had not attended a regular course of philosophy and divinity in some of the universities of the nation, and who had not been regularly licensed to preach the gospel."* The Episcopalians were animated by the same feeling, and rigorously shut their doors against their brother Episcopalian from the south. This is partly to be attributed to the narrow and exclusive spirit of the times, but it is much more to be attributed to the resentment which had been awakened by the things which had been said and done.

Rowland Hill arrived in Edinburgh, on a second tour, on the Friday after the Assembly had risen, and found, as he says, "all the city quite thunderstruck at the fulminating bull which had been issued." He instantly set himself to

* Lives of the Haldanes, pp. 259–61.

repay the compliment which had been done him; and in every sermon, as we are told, "he fired red-hot shots against the General Assembly and the General Associate Synod." He was well fitted for this kind of work. A strange medley he certainly was—half comedian, half divine; quite as much at home in making people laugh as in making them cry. For anecdote, sarcasm, pungent saying, his quiver was full of these, and he did not spare them. "Three reasons alone," said he, "can be assigned for the Church's conduct: these are madness, malice, or an attempt to discover our treasonable plots; and the first of these should seem the most probable, the pastoral admonition being dated on the day of the full moon."* His second tour was in fact a crusade against all the Churches of Scotland. Bitter things were said, and of course bitter resentments were roused; but, with all his oddities, Rowland Hill was a large-hearted man; and there can be no doubt he uttered truths which, when the irritation of the time subsided, helped to break down the barriers which separated Church from Church, and Christian from Christian. His own conduct in fraternizing with the Haldanes—an English Episcopalian with Scotch Independents—is a monument of catholicity.

Such were the events occurring in Scotland when the eighteenth century drew to a close; and to the rude shock which these communicated, both to the Established and Dissenting Churches, we may trace part of the activity and zeal which agitated Scotland in the succeeding age.

* Jones's Memoirs of Rowland Hill. Lives of the Haldanes.

CHAPTER XIII.

PRESBYTERY had now existed for more than a hundred years without interruption, and it had stood the test of time. It had shown itself possessed of enough of the plastic nature to accommodate itself to circumstances. Under the weak government of the Sixth James, it had been turbulent and domineering; under the strong government of the House of Hanover, it was courtly and complying. The frenzied fanaticism with which it had carried out the principles of the Covenant, the fierceness with which it had turned upon its persecutors when it was called to resist unto blood, made many say that it was a thing which no man could tame; but it was seen that, after all, Presbyterians were but men, amenable to all the influences which usually operate upon men. Placed under a government which it was vain to resist, they submitted; kindly treated by the government, they became loyal. Knowing that vulgar abuse, though spoken from the pulpit, would no longer raise them to the rank of saints and confessors, they abandoned the practice, and discoursed in as dulcet tones as the best-bred London rector. The most fastidious critic could find little fault with the flowing and finished periods of Robertson and Blair.

It was a maxim of James VI., and his son and his grandson after him, that Presbytery was inconsistent with monarchy. No bishop, no king. Their experience afforded some foundation for their faith; but the whole history of the eighteenth century proved, that a republican Church might be the firmest ally of a monarchical State. In troublous times,

the Church of Scotland stood fast by the throne, and greatly helped to break the back of two formidable rebellions. The strongest conservative principles not unfrequently enter into the political creed of Presbyterian ministers.

The polished though unprincipled Charles gets credit for saying, that Presbytery was not a religion for a gentleman. It certainly never has been a religion for such a gentleman as he was. It never has gilded courtly vices; it never has preached profligacy and fraud. But if the saying simply insinuated the want of refinement, the eighteenth century removed the reproach. The Revolution Church was not long established till its ministers began to aim at a different style of preaching than had been used on the hillside; a high degree of excellence was gradually attained; and the pulpit eloquence of Scotland at this period will favourably compare with that of the south. The finest gentleman in the empire, a king himself, might have listened with pleasure to the dignified eloquence of Dr Dick, or the fervid declamation which made Webster the idol of the people. Some ministers were taunted by their brethren with aiming at more than literary merit. They were accused of aping the manner, the tones, the postures of the Anglican clergy. Their stubborn Presbyterianism was breaking down under southern influences.*

The two parties who divided the Church Courts are said to have been recognisable in general society. The Popular men were somewhat austere in their manners, and never put off the clergyman. The Moderates aimed at that suavity of deportment which lends to society its principal charm. They had no rules to hinder them from doing as other Christians did. They would take a hand at cards, they would dance, they would sing an accompaniment. Their urbanity and accomplishments made them favourites at the dinner-table and the tea-party. But though sometimes censured by the stricter sort for their laxity, they were, with a few exceptions, men of exemplary lives.†

Either party is also said to have had its own style of

* See Witherspoon's Characteristics. In the Scots Magazine, too, there are several articles in which this is insinuated.

† Mackenzie's Life of Home, &c.

preaching. The Popular men were rigidly Calvinistic, giving prominence to the doctrines of election and irresistible grace; the Moderates, if not Arminians, at least kept out of view the peculiar principles of Calvinism. The former dwelt much upon the doctrines of Christianity, and especially upon justification by faith; the latter insisted mainly upon the keeping of the commandments. They had a peculiar fondness for sermons upon sympathy, good-will, benevolence, honesty, and all the other cardinal virtues.

It has been frequently said, that a large proportion of the Moderate clergy were Rationalists. There is very little foundation for the assertion when thus broadly made. It is certain that scepticism was much more common among the the educated classes then than now. The wit of Voltaire and philosophy of Hume had produced this result. Some of the clergy were infected with the prevailing spirit, and began to doubt the peculiar doctrines of Christianity. The writings of Taylor of Norwich found their way to the north, and helped still further to unsettle their faith in regard to the divinity and atonement of Christ. Of such there were a few; but they were never very numerous, and in general managed to conceal their opinions. It is singular they were to be found chiefly in the west—the old seat of the Covenant.*

Before the end of the century, the contest about patronage might be regarded as over. Patrons now saw themselves in possession of an undoubted right, and generally exercised it, with full assurance that the presbytery would induct their presentee. For more than forty years the Assembly had annually instructed its Commission to remonstrate, if opportunity should occur, against patronage as a grievance; but in 1781 the instruction was let drop. Patronage was no longer regarded as a burden. The call still remained, but it remained only as a memorial of ancient freedom, like the

* The assertions made in regard to this matter are very contradictory. Lord Cockburn, in his "Memorials," emphatically denies that there was much infidelity among the upper classes at the close of the eighteenth century. He declares he never heard such a thing as infidelity mooted. In such books as the "Lives of the Haldanes," we are led to believe that almost all the clergy were Socinians and sceptics together. In this there is gross and mischievous exaggeration.

senate and the consulship during the empire of Rome. A presentee might be ordained, though there was not a single name appended to his call. The Moderates said that patronage had elevated the character of the clergy; their opponents affirmed that it had introduced hirelings into the Church, who were careless about their flocks, but were ever dancing attendance on the gentry.

Dissent was steadily on the increase. Though the people seldom opposed a presentee whom they disliked, they too frequently, when such a man was forced upon them, abandoned the parish church for the meeting-house. The Seceders were ever on the alert, ready to take advantage of any discontent that had sprung up in a parish. In 1773 the Burgher Associate Synod had fifty-nine congregations, served by forty-three ministers; the Antiburgher Associate Synod had ninety-seven congregations, and seventy-seven ministers; the Relief Synod had nineteen congregations, and fourteen ministers; the Cameronians had nine congregations, and seven ministers; of Independent congregations there were six; so that, beside Roman Catholics and Episcopalians, there were already in Scotland one hundred and ninety Dissenting congregations, although Dissent was scarcely forty years old.*

The Seceders from the very first had exhibited an unhappy propensity to division. In their spiritual optics, the smallest matters of opinion were magnified into cases of conscience, for which they must necessarily excommunicate one another. We have already seen them split into Burghers and Antiburghers. Toward the end of the century, the Burghers quarrelled among themselves in regard to the continued obligation of the Covenants, and the amount of power in religious matters assigned to the civil magistrate in the Westminster Confession. In 1799 a minority withdrew, and assumed to themselves the name of the Old Light Burghers. About the same period the Antiburghers

* Dr Francis Hutchison's "Considerations on Patronage," first published in 1735, was republished in 1774; and attached to it was a table showing the strength of the Dissenters in Scotland. It is from it that I have borrowed my statistics.

began to quarrel about the civil magistrate; and in 1806 a swarm came off from the parent-hive, and called themselves the Constitutional Associate Presbytery. These had a great name in Dr M'Crie, the biographer of Melville and Knox; but his literary merits did not save him from the excommunication of the Antiburgher Synod.* But notwithstanding the intestine wars which these divisions implied, the Seceders were steadily increasing. They looked like those animals which propagate themselves by the separation of their parts.

The Seceder ministers were still somewhat narrow in the irnotions, but more than any other religious body they had thrown themselves upon the people; and as the people became more liberal and enlightened, they became more liberal and enlightened too. Till near the end of the century, they preached the intolerant principles of the Covenants.† In our own day they command universal respect—there is no path of literature which they do not tread; there is no catholic sentiment which they do not maintain. But it was not so from the beginning; they have been floated to it by

* See Life of Dr M'Crie.

† There is a defence of persecution by one of the Seceders, which is very curious, if not ingenious. "What harm is there if magistrates oblige people to profess and own that religion which the people themselves know to be of God? May not magistrates oblige them to walk suitably to God's will made known to them? Yea, farther, what injustice were it if a godly magistrate should oblige his pagan or idolatrous subjects to hear the Word of God, that they may judge of it afterwards in their own consciences? If this author think that unlawful, I am sure MacLean of Coll had a much better thought of things, who obliged his Popish tenants to hear a Protestant minister, leaving it to them to judge of his doctrine. And God so far blest the gentleman's honest endeavours, that after some days almost all of them turned Protestants, being convinced of the truth by its intrinsic evidences, and owned it was their mercy they were made to hear the gospel against their own inclination. No doubt some will say this is a forcing of men's consciences; and, if it were allowed, princes in other parts of the world may oblige their subjects to go to mass or to Mahometan mosques; but I answer, a magistrate may lawfully do that for truth which no prince may do against it. It is lawful for the kings of the earth *to hate the whore, and burn her flesh with fire;* but it never was nor will be lawful for any to treat the Church of God so" (p. 57). (A Review of a Paper lately written against the Law and Binding Obligation of our Sacred National Covenants, by a Lover of Truth and Peace, re-edited in 1779 by a Member of the Secession.) I have not seen the tract itself, and have taken the above extract from Burton's History, vol. i. p. 201.

a rising tide. The Relief Church was open-hearted from the first.

The descendants of Cameron and Cargill continued faithfully to preserve the principles of the Covenants. For many years, however, M'Millan was left almost alone to bear up their banner. When the Seceders left the Establishment, it was thought that they might amalgamate with the men who had always kept aloof from it as an enslaved and Erastian thing; but, instead of peace, there was soon war between them. A controversy arose in regard to the obedience due to an uncovenanted State, written by pens dipped in wormwood. A Mr Nairn left the Seceders and joined the Cameronians; and this convert, joined to M'Millan and some ruling elders, enabled a presbytery to be formed in 1743, under the name of the Reformed Presbytery. In 1745 they renewed the Covenants—never to be renewed again. From time to time they gave their testimony against what they conceived to be prevailing sins, but they never greatly multiplied among the people.*

The Episcopalians still continued to linger on, notwithstanding the terrors of proscription. They had greatly diminished, however, in numbers and strength. The Established Church had, in a great measure, proselytized the Episcopal districts of the north; but many of the gentry everywhere still clung to a Church which, even in its humiliation, had more imposing forms than Presbytery. Ever since the debates about the Usages, there had been a tendency among the Scotch Episcopalians to depart from the Liturgy of the Church of England, and to adopt what were considered more primitive forms. In 1764 a new Communion Office was published, and speedily came into use. It is based upon the First Service-Book of Edward VI., and the Liturgy of Laud; and Scotch Episcopalians delight to tell that in all its peculiarities it is rather Oriental than Roman. It consists of seven parts—A Eucharistia, or Thanksgiving: A Commemoration of our Lord's Words and Actions at the Institution: An Oblation of the Elements to God: An Invocation or Prayer for the Descent of the Holy Ghost, that

* See Reformed Presbyterian Testimony, pp. 186, 187.

so the Bread and Wine may become the Body and Blood of God's Son: A Prayer for the whole Church: The Lord's Prayer: The Communion.* So it is arranged, we are told, in the most ancient liturgies; but to common minds it appears to differ from the simple arrangements for the First Supper, as recorded by the Evangelists.

On the 31st of January 1788, Charles Edward Stewart, grandson of James VII., died at Rome; and the Episcopal clergy, although the Cardinal York still lived, believed themselves set free from their allegiance to the Stewarts. They resolved to pray for George III. by name, in the words of the English Liturgy. Some of the sturdy old Jacobites, however, regarded this as a surrender of principle. Bishop Rose of Dunblane, and the Episcopal minister of Montrose, refused compliance. "Well do I remember," says an old Jacobite, "the day on which the name of George was mentioned in the Morning Service for the first time—such blowing of noses—such significant hums: such half-suppressed sighs—such smothered groans and universal confusion, can hardly be conceived." Loyal, after the lapse of a century, they resolved to seek the protection of the law. Presbyterian ministers and Presbyterian laymen showed their catholicity by forwarding their wishes; and in 1792 they were relieved of the disabilities under which they had groaned.†

* Stephen's History of the Church, vol. iv.

† Skinner's Annals of Scotch Episcopacy. Stephen's History of the Church, vol. iv. There was a strange instance, at this crisis in the Episcopal Church's fate, of the way in which the apostolical succession may be secured. The Rev. James Brown of Montrose, mentioned in the text, put himself at the head of the discontented Jacobites, and, says Skinner, "not only took upon himself the pastoral charge of them, but also made a most daring attempt to perpetuate the schism, by invading the rights of the episcopate itself; having the hardihood to repair to the village of Doune, in Perthshire, where Bishop Rose resided, in the extreme of dotage, and causing him to perform the office of consecration. When questioned soon after whether the case were so, the venerable prelate, in all the simplicity of childhood, made answer—'My sister may have done it, but not I.'" (See Annals, p. 183.) This almost matches the story told by Eusebius of the man in the third century, who inveigled "three bishops, rustic and very simple men," into bad company, where they got intoxicated, and then persuaded them, while "in a crapulous state," to lay their hands on him. (See Hist. Eccles., lib. iv. chap. xliii.)

Popery still lingered in its ancient haunts. There were parishes in the Highlands and Islands where almost the entire population was Catholic. In truth, during the seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth, while Presbyterians and Episcopalians were devouring one another, Papists were multiplying. There were some remote districts neglected by the Establishment, with no church and no minister, which the priests took possession of, and managed to proselytize the whole population. On a small, scale there was such a reaction as took place on so large a scale in other countries of Europe. But the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge had now been in existence for nearly a century; its teachers had opened their schools in many a sequestered hamlet; its itinerants had penetrated many a lonely glen, carrying with them Protestant truth; and Popery began again to give way. Some of the Hebridean chiefs, hitherto Romanists, became converts to Protestantism; and, exercising their patriarchal authority, drove their caterans before them to the parish church, that they might be converted too. Without justifying this forcible mode of conversion, we may believe that after all no great violence was done to the consciences of a people too rude to understand the theological dogmas which separate Papists from Protestants, and too devoted to their chief to question his authority even in matters of faith.

The increase of dissent had produced a result which was not at first anticipated—it drained the treasury out of which the poor were provided for. The Reformed Church of Scotland had always made the infirm and the indigent a source of solicitude. The support of the poor was one of the great objects for which it claimed the Church's patrimony. Disappointed in this, it fell back upon the voluntary alms of the people. The apostles had recommended the first Christians to make collections for their poorer brethren when they met together on the first day of the week. Following the apostolic precept, the Church of Scotland has always given its worshippers an opportunity of making their alms as well as their prayers go up before God when they assemble in His house. The fund thus collected

was managed by the minister and kirk-session, who took the whole poor of the parish under their care; and so long as there was no secession from the Established Church, this fund was generally found to be enough. There was no regular assessment for the poor before 1755. After that date, however, the heritors in parish after parish required to assess themselves, to supplement the deficiency in the sessions' funds.* Still, however, the minister and his elders bore the burden of administering the poor's-money; and in general the assessment of the heritors was comparatively small. But pauperism increased with the increase of wealth. Not fifteen years ago a new order of things was introduced; and now the annual assessment for the poor amounts to nearly L.600,000—more than twice the amount of the revenue of the Established Church.

The condition of many of the country churches at the close of the eighteenth century was very melancholy. In some the roof was in daily danger of falling down; in some there were no seats; in very many the earthen floor sent agues and rheumatisms into the feet of the worshippers. Some are described as much more like sheds for cattle than temples consecrated to God. The damp air which met the parishioner as he entered was like the noxious atmosphere of a burial vault, or an underground cellar. In stormy weather the wind came whistling through the broken panes,

* 1755 is the year mentioned by Sir Henry Moncreiff in his Life of Dr Erskine (see the Appendix); and he is substantially correct. There were a few, and only a few, parishes in which there was an assessment for the poor prior to that date. Thus, in Jedburgh, there was an assessment in 1742; in Hamilton in 1750; but these were exceptional cases; and in the vast majority of parishes it was after 1755 before an assessment became necessary. See the Original Statistical Account, 1797.

Anciently the kirk-sessions did much more than aliment the poor. They gave contributions to build bridges, to repair roads, to erect harbours, to support deserving students at college, &c.; for all these were considered as "pious uses." The following is a specimen from the accounts of the kirk-session of Crieff:—

1701, June 3.	For a harbour on the coast of Fife, . .	L.3	15	0
„	Given for Veckor Bridge, ...	2	0	0
1702, Nov. 15.	James Hamilton, a poor stranger, with a wife and sax children, ...	1	0	0
1704, Oct. 8.	For the redemption of John Thomson, a slave,	3	0	0

the wet streamed down the unlathed walls and, penetrating the roof, dripped upon the floor.* It had long been so in Scotland. An Englishman, who visited our country shortly before the Union, and wrote an account of what he saw and heard, in order that his countrymen might know something of the unknown land with which they were so soon to be united, remarks, that while the churches in the towns were in general spacious and good, the churches in the country were like the subterranean caves in which the early Christians met to worship. As it was at the beginning of the century, so it was at the close. The eighteenth century was certainly the dark age of ecclesiastical architecture in Scotland. Scarcely a single example can be quoted of even a decent church being reared during its course. In the western Highlands there were many large parishes without churches at all, and had been so since the time of the Reformation.†

Though an act of parliament, passed soon after the Revolution, made it imperative upon the heritors of every parish to erect a school and provide a salary for the schoolmaster,

* Original Statistical Account, vol. viii. p. 352; vol. x. p. 271; vol. xi. p. 129; vol. xv. p. 575. Out of a host of notices of the miserable state of the parish churches, we select the two following. The first is the parish of Morven:—"There are two churches, so called from their outward appearance; but, with respect to decency of accommodation, they might as properly be called sheds." The next is Heriot:—"The church is an old and infirm building. It is scarcely safe to perform public duty in it. It is neither dry above nor decently seated. It is perhaps the most shabby and miserable place of accommodation for divine service in Scotland." See also Report of Drs Hyndman, Dick, &c., appointed by the General Assembly 1760 to visit the Highlands and Islands, and the places where itinerants and catechists were employed. (Scots Magazine, vol. xxviii. pp. 457, 513, 573.)

† The commissioners quoted above say in their report:—"The want of churches in parishes legally erected, which is so common in the western Highlands and Islands, makes a considerable addition to the other disadvantages of these countries. The inhabitants are obliged to attend divine service in the open fields, or in houses which, from their inconveniency and meanness, are improper for the purposes of religion. The aged and infirm cannot well support this attendance, and the appearance of a public religion is destroyed. In almost all those counties where churches are now wanting we saw the ruins of decent edifices, which had been anciently devoted to sacred use. These had been built before the Reformation. We observe with concern, that since that period, in many parishes, the house of God hath continued to lie waste." Scots Magazine, vol. xxviii. p. 576.

in many parishes, especially in the Highlands and Islands, the law had been evaded. In 1758 the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge represented to the General Assembly that there were in the Highlands no fewer than a hundred and seventy-five parishes without schools. This representation did good; it called attention to the evil, and led, not only to the establishment of many schools in destitute localities, but to the erection of about forty chapels in districts far distant from any parish-church. But everywhere the parish schoolmasters were miserably ill paid. It was only by holding a great plurality of offices they could live. In many parishes they were at once schoolmaster, session-clerk, precentor, beadle, and, in a few cases, gravedigger.*

The Scotch have always been regarded as a peculiarly religious people. This is partly to be ascribed to the national character. There is a native earnestness in the Scottish mind. There is nothing frivolous about it. It is serious, almost solemn. Hence religious ideas can easily be engrafted upon it. But it is also partly to be ascribed to the national history. For the last three hundred years, the national history has been almost exclusively ecclesiastical. The old feuds with England were gone; more bitter feuds arose among ourselves. Since Knox lifted up his voice at St Andrews, there has been a constant struggle with Popery, with Prelacy, with patronage. Nor has this contest been carried on merely by a conclave of dignified divines. The republican nature of the Presbyterian Church enlisted every one in the common cause. Every minister and every elder could speak his sentiments authoritatively in kirk-sessions and presbyteries; and from them the excitement spread to every member of the community. During the triumphs of the Covenants, during the dark days of persecution, during the conflict with patronage, every man, woman, and child felt the throbbings of the universal heart. For the space of

* In the Statistical Account of Heriot it is said of the schoolmaster—"He is also precentor, session-clerk, beadle, and gravedigger, and yet his whole income does not exceed L.8 *per annum*." (Original Statistical Account of Scotland, Heriot, 1795.)

three centuries, the Scotch have had little to speak of, little to think of, but ecclesiastical occurrences.

But the struggles to which we have referred were more ecclesiastical than religious, and hence Scotch piety is deeply tinctured with ecclesiasticism. It may, without much liberality, be allowed, that Christianity would have survived in our country though Presbytery had been destroyed. Christianity is not bound up with any form of church-polity. The sternest Presbyterian will at length allow that a bishop may be a Christian man. It was not, therefore, for Christianity, but merely for Presbytery, that our forefathers fought. The religious struggles of our country were entirely about church-government and church-discipline, and not about the inner truths of our holy faith. It is possible that too great attention to the one may withdraw the mind from the attention which it ought to bestow upon the other. There is some reason to think that this result has been exemplified in Scotland. Scotchmen certainly talk much more about church matters than about matters purely spiritual. There is an abundance of ecclesiasticism in our country; there is perhaps a defect of spiritualism.

But it has been frequently remarked that Scotch piety is intellectual rather than devotional; and the remark is based upon truth. The peculiarity probably arises in a great measure from the prominence which is given to preaching in the Scottish Church. There are hundreds of thousands who have no means of getting their intellects exercised, or their knowledge enlarged, but the pulpit. Nightly tired with their daily toil, they have little inclination to read books, though they had them; but on the day of rest, they receive from the lips of a pious and educated man truths to speak of when they sit with their families at the fireside, and to think of when they follow their plough in the field. In the villages, coteries of keen disputants discuss at the corners of the streets during the week the subjects which were discussed in the church upon the Sabbath. The Calvinistic creed, too, is purely intellectual; the Shorter Catechism is purely intellectual; and these have done much to mould the national character. With all these means of in-

creasing doctrinal knowledge, there is no corresponding means of drawing out devotional feeling. Till the "Aids to Devotion" were recently published, by authority of the General Assembly, there was no Book of Common Prayer which the people might read at their altar on the hearth, or when tossed on the tempestuous sea, or when sojourning in a foreign land. Hence it is that in English piety there is generally a tenderness and prayerfulness which is not often found in the north. But in the north there are strong religious convictions, which, if they have sometimes made Scotchmen dogmatic and narrow-minded, have much more frequently made them sturdy, resolute, and conscientious, and so helped them to rise to eminence in every sphere of life, and in every quarter of the world.

While the Scotch have repudiated holidays as sinful, no people upon earth have shown a greater tendency to religious solemnities and holy convocations. The dispensation of the sacrament of the Supper in Scotland has for two hundred years been surrounded with observances unknown in every other portion of Christendom. And a sacramental season now is little to what it was during the last century. For many miles round, all the churches were shut up save the one in which the sacrament was to be administered. On the Fast-Day there were three sermons; on the Saturday there were two sermons; but the Sabbath was the great day of the feast. Many thousands gathered together from every district of the country. It was nothing unusual for persons to travel twenty or thirty miles to such a gathering. It brought back the remembrance of those great festivals when every male presented himself before the Lord in Jerusalem. As no church could contain such a multitude, a preaching-tent was set up in the churchyard. The people sat upon the mounds of the graves, leant upon the tombstones, reverentially stood in the outskirts of the crowd, and minister after minister proclaimed to them, under the open vault of heaven, the glad tidings of salvation. As this was going on without, the sacramental table was spread within the church, and company after company of disciples sat down to commemorate their Saviour's death. The voice of

psalmody, streaming from the open windows of the sacred edifice, gave notice to those around the tent that another table was served, and that another was ready to be filled. Thus the sacred services proceeded, and not unfrequently continued from ten in the morning till eight or nine at night.

Such scenes as these were much more than picturesque—they were sublime. They were felt to be deeply impressive by the susceptible soul. But though not unmingled with good, they were found to lead to very serious evils. In such promiscuous assemblages, there were men and women of very varied characters, drawn together by very different motives. At a distance from home, they required to resort to the public-house for food; and in the public-house, the custom of the country required them to drink strong drink. Men treated women,—women sat and boosed with men. While there was deep solemnity in the church and the churchyard, there were not unfrequently brawls in the village; and when all was over, too many were to be seen on the roads excited by whisky, or made stupid by whisky, staggering homewards. Burns ridiculed such assemblages in his "Holy Fair;" and though he has unfortunately mingled unseasonable levity with his caustic wit, the satire did good, and now such sacramental gatherings are almost entirely unknown.

It is difficult to form a comparative estimate of the amount of piety sixty years ago. Probably there was then more piety among the lower classes, and less among the higher, than at present. The poor very generally, at that period, worshipped God in their dwellings; they do not so generally worship Him now. The rich and the noble then too commonly neglected a practice which now they very generally observe. This may be regarded as an index of the respect, at least, which is paid to religion.*

It is certain that religion at this period was being gradu-

* This is the estimate formed by Dr M'Gill, the late Professor of Divinity in the University of Glasgow, whose years carried him back to the time of which he spoke. See his evidence upon patronage before the committee of the House of Commons.

ally purged of superstition, though it was not yet, as it probably never will be, free from all admixture of it. Witchcraft, though blotted out of the criminal code of the country, was very generally believed in by the lower orders of the people;* but we need scarcely wonder at this, as there are districts where it is believed in still. Strange stories there are, which a short tradition has preserved, of the religious horror with which some of the peasantry regarded fanners for the winnowing of grain at their first introduction, as an instrument evidently invented by the prince of the power of the air, and as derogatory to the God of the heavens and the earth;† and these we shall readily believe when we remember the objections taken only a few years ago to the use of chloroform, as an impious attempt to relieve woman of the curse, "in sorrow shalt thou bring forth." But though many narrow notions still lingered in the country, religious rancour had happily died. The excitement created by the conquests of the Covenant, the bitterness of heart engendered by the cruelties of the "killing time," the flush of success and the pride of domination begotten by the Revolution, had gradually abated, and for long there had been nothing to ruffle the religious mind but the contests about patronage, which were necessarily local and temporary. So great was the contrast with the past, that many have looked upon this age as bound up in the cerements of spiritual death.

At the close of last century and the beginning of this, intemperance was painfully prevalent among the middle and upper classes of society. When a gentleman gave a dinner to his friends, it was thought he was lacking in hospitality if he did not press the bottle upon his guests till they were

* In the Statistical Account of Midcalder, the minister says—"I cannot say that the belief in witchcraft has entirely left the people in this parish, but it appears to have little influence either on their lives or their conduct. While some give no credit to it at all, but impute the whole of it to delusion, the most general opinion among the common people is, that it did formerly prevail, but they are convinced that the power of the gospel has now put it to flight." (Statistical Account, 1795, vol. xiv. p. 373.)

† Fanners were first used in Scotland about the middle of the eighteenth century. See Statistical Account, vol. viii. p. 525; vol. xvii. p. 123.

fairly drunk. Some of the clergy were unfortunately carried away with the convivial spirit of the times, and amidst bacchanalian merriment forgot their sacred character. Profane swearing was equally common. Almost every sentence was garnished with an oath, and to swear roundly and well was considered the mark of a gentleman.* In these respects society has prodigiously improved. Fashion has fortunately set her face against both intemperance and swearing. No gentleman may now enter a drawing-room with a flushed face and unsteady step, or utter an oath in any company whatever. But unfortunately these vices, when driven from the abodes of fashion, have found a shelter in the haunts of poverty. The statistics which have recently proved Scotland at this day to be one of the most immoral, and one of the most intemperate nations of Europe, should make us refrain from being the first to cast a stone at our grandfathers.

The discipline of the Church had relaxed a little from its ancient severity, but still it was more severe than it is in our day. Sackcloth had been laid aside;† but still the penitents required to stand up in the church, and bear a rebuke from the pulpit, amid the simpering and blushes of the congregation. Such scenes must have done infinite damage to morals. Young girls went home from church with their native modesty debauched by what they had heard and seen; young men went home to laugh at the confusion of the frail delinquent, and the awful gravity of the clerical censor. In some cases this painful penance was commuted to a fine, which went to the funds for the poor; and in Edinburgh the increase of immorality between 1763

* Amongst a host of authorities the reader may be referred to Lord Cockburn's Memorials; but the period referred to is within the memory of many still living.

† In the accounts of the kirk-session of Crieff the following entries occur:—

1701, June. To James Gib, for sackcloath, . . £1 5 0

„ „ To John Paterson, for making sackcloath, 0 6 0

I imagine this must have been the robe of repentance; but, so far as I can trace, it must have been generally laid aside at this time. Not far below the above entries is this one:—

John M'Intyre, for building ye repentance seat, . . £5 0 0

The kirk-session of Crieff at this period appears to have been erecting anew the old apparatus of Presbyterian discipline.

and 1783 was shown by the revenue from this source having risen from L.154 to L.600.* But Roman critics were not slack to say that this was no better than buying an indulgence—the old substitution of pay for penance.

There was a species of Church discipline—called *privy censures*—then prevalent, in which presbyteries sat in judgment upon themselves. Brother after brother was questioned in regard to the management of his parish; and then being asked to retire, the remanent brethren pronounced their sentence of approval or condemnation upon him. It is very evident, however, that in most cases this had become a mere form. The questions, the answers, the judgment, were all stereotyped; and occur with unvarying certainty in the presbytery's minutes. Such privy censures are now more honoured in the breach than the observance.†

During the century a change had gradually come over the order of public worship. Though the Westminster Directory was not re-enacted by the Scottish parliament after the Revolution, it was regarded by the Presbyterians as still the law of their Church.‡ According to its instructions, the minister began the church-service by prayer.

* Stevenson's Chronicle of Edinburgh, pp. 219–23.

† The following is the almost unvarying form of minute in the Records of the Presbytery of Auchterarder about 1740 :—"This diet being for prayer and privy censures, several members prayed, all had the ordinary questions proposed to them, which they answering satisfactorily, are removed *per vices* for censure; and nothing being found censurable about them, they are approven of, exhorted to continue their diligence, and desired to encourage themselves in the Lord." Occasionally there were what were called *visitations of parishes*, when elders, heritors, and heads of families were called, and invited to inform against their minister and each other.

‡ See Collections, &c., by Walter Steuart of Pardovan, book ii. title i. Steuart says—"The congregation being assembled, the minister, after solemn calling on them to the worshipping of the great name of God, is to begin with prayer. The public worship being begun, the people are wholly to attend on it, forbearing to read anything, except what the minister is then reading or citing; much more are they to abstain from all private whisperings, conferences, salutations, or doing reverence to any person present, or coming in, as also from all gazing, sleeping, or other indecent behaviour."

Pardovan warns the people against any private devotions in church. "All," says he, "are to enter the assembly in a grave and seemly manner, to take their seats or places without adoration, or bowing themselves toward one place or another. If any through necessity be hindered from being present at the beginning, they ought not, when they come into the congregation, to betake

Yet it is certain, that long before the close of the century—if not at its very beginning—the service was almost uniformly begun by a psalm. We are able satisfactorily to trace the source of this apparent inconsistency between the law and practice of the Church. For long, both in Presbyterian and Episcopal times, it had been customary for the precentor to repair to church half an hour before the minister, and read to the people who had assembled two or three chapters from the Old and New Testaments. When the minister appeared, the precentor started a psalm; and when it was concluded, the minister commenced his duties by offering up a prayer, thus closely adhering to the Directory for Worship.* Early in the eighteenth century, however, the functions of the precentor were curtailed. It was no longer his function to read the Word; it was no longer his privilege to prescribe a psalm. The service was not begun till the minister entered the pulpit, who gave out the psalm himself, leaving the precentor to lead the music. Unfortunately, when the Presbyterian ministers took it upon themselves to prescribe the psalms, they did not also take it upon themselves to read the Scriptures. At that period these were seldom read from Scottish pulpits.

themselves to their private devotions, but reverently compose themselves to join with the assembly in that ordinance of God which is then in hand."

* See a Short Account of Scotland, with a Description of the Nature of that Kingdom, and what the Constitution of it in Church and State; written by the late Rev. Mr Morer, minister of St Ann's, Aldergate, when he was chaplain to a Scotch regiment. London, 1715. This interesting tract has been republished in the Miscellany of the Spalding Club. The author speaks of the unreasonableness of the disputes between the Presbyterians and Episcopalians in Scotland, as there was very little difference between them. He says they had private courts sometimes called *consistorial*, sometimes *kirk-sessions;* and, besides these, presbyteries and provincial synods. The ministers, he informs us, wore gowns and cassocks, they had no casual perquisites or fees, and were accustomed to crave a blessing over everything, even a glass of wine. The rural "churches," he says, "were poor and mean, and no better than their ordinary cottages;" but in the towns they were much more commodious. They had few bells, but frequently a steeple with a hand-dial to show the age of the moon. The writer then proceeds to mention the order of worship as we have given it in the text. The precentors, in fact, were the lineal descendants of the readers; and when the liturgy was laid aside, they still continued to read the Scriptures. It is from this circumstance the precentor's desk is still called the *lectern*, or vulgarly, the *litter*.

Toward the close of the century, a small but valuable addition was made to the books previously used in the public worship of God. Hitherto the Psalms of David, done into metre by Rouse,* were the only expression of praise which the Scottish worshipper possessed. It had long been felt that there were many passages of Scripture, both in the Old and the New Testament, besides the Psalms, which gave fine utterance to the religious emotions, and which, if versified, might very appropriately be sung in the sanctuary. So far back as 1742, the General Assembly appointed a committee to collect and prepare metrical translations and paraphrases of portions of sacred writ ;† but their labours proceeded very slowly ; and, though the subject was before a succession of Assemblies, nothing was done. By 1751, however, a collection of forty-five paraphrases had been made, and was now laid before the Assembly for its approval. Of these, nineteen were by Dr Watts ; three by Blair, the author of "The Grave;" three by William Robertson, minister of Greyfriars, and father of the historian ; two by Dr Doddridge ; and one by Mr Randal of Stirling. The Assembly ordered these to be sent down to the presbyteries for their approval, and in the meantime recommended that they should be used by families in their private devotions.‡

* Francis Rouse was born in 1579, and was several times elected a member of parliament during the reign of Charles I. He was also one of the lay commissioners to the Westminster Assembly. At once a Republican and a Puritan, he was zealous for the establishment of a Commonwealth, modelled after the Hebrew Republic. He gave also his influence to Cromwell, whom he likened to Moses, and was rewarded for his devotion by being made Provost of Eaton, and Speaker of the Commons. He died in 1659. For farther information regarding his translation of the Psalms, see this History, A.D. 1647–48.

† Morren's Annals of the Assembly, vol. i. pp. 34, 35. See also the Acts of the Assembly (1745) p. 681, and (1746) p. 690.

‡ Acts of Assembly, p. 706. The Act runs as follows :—"The General Assembly, finding that several of the presbyteries have not sent up any opinion to this Assembly concerning the psalmody, notwithstanding a new edition, with amendments of the translations and paraphrases of Sacred Scripture, was transmitted to them, do again transmit the same, requiring such presbyteries as have hitherto been deficient to send up their opinions to the next Assembly ; and, in the meantime, the Assembly recommend the said psalmody to be used in private families, and that presbyteries be careful to have a sufficient number of copies of the said last edition to supply the bounds." One of

This was an important step. The hymns gradually found their way into pious households, though, with a few exceptions, nothing but the psalms were yet sung in the churches.

So matters remained for twenty-four years; but in 1775 the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr overtured the General Assembly that leave should be given, to such ministers as chose, to use in public worship the Paraphrases which had received the partial sanction of the Church. In consequence of this, a committee was appointed to revise and enlarge the collection of 1751. It was not till 1781 that they brought their labours to a close; but in that year they reported that they "had now prepared such a collection of sacred poems as they thought might be submitted to the judgment of the Church."

This new collection contained the forty-five Paraphrases of the former edition, but considerably altered, and twenty-two additional ones. Of these, seven were believed to be the composition of Logan, minister of South Leith; four of Morrison, minister of Canisbay; two of Cameron, minister of Kirknewton. The alterations upon the old Paraphrases were almost all made with a judicious and tasteful hand; and for these we are indebted chiefly to Cameron and Logan. The Assembly gave a temporary sanction to the use of this collection, and, to insure correctness, conferred an exclusive privilege of printing it upon one person for five years; but it also ordered it to be sent down to the presbyteries for their approval, that the provisions of the Barrier Act might be fulfilled.*

It would appear that a majority of presbyteries did not send up to the Assembly their approval of the Paraphrases. Certain it is there is no Act of Assembly formally sanctioning them. But the Paraphrases recommended to the As-

the great hindrances to progress all along appears to have been the neglect of presbyteries to transmit their opinions.

* I have gathered my information upon this subject chiefly from an interesting series of articles upon Psalmody in the "Edinburgh Christian Magazine," by the Rev. William Robertson of Monzievaird. They have, since their appearance in the "Magazine" (in 1858), been collected and republished, under the title of "Notes on Psalmody;" but, I am sorry to say, only for private circulation.

sembly of 1781, and which the Assembly of 1781 allowed to be used for a time, and only for a time, till the opinion of the presbyteries should be obtained,* are the very Paraphrases which now, after the lapse of nearly eighty years, are still so often and so sweetly sung in the churches. Every one now feels that, without these simple and beautiful songs, he could not give full utterance to the devotional feelings of his heart. They breathe the fresh fragrance of gospel times; they come like a wind from the land where Jesus lived. The King of Zion, notwithstanding his manifold experience of human life, saw Christian truth but darkly and dimly through the mists of a thousand years; and oftentimes he has no voice to express what a worshipper of Jesus now feels. His Jewish heart was necessarily a stranger to a thousand feelings which the Christian heart well knows. The Christian Church demanded a psalmody of its own; and the Scottish Church found such a psalmody by rendering into verse some of the noblest sentiments of the prophets and apostles.

For nearly thirty years after the introduction of the Paraphrases, no farther attention appears to have been given to the subject; but the nineteenth century had not long entered upon its course till an interest in the poetry of the Church began to revive. Many felt dissatisfied with the old Puritanic translation of the Psalms. Its roughness, its frequent homeliness, the uncouth rhymes, and the drawn-out syllabication which it sometimes admits, was not, in their minds, compensated by the Saxon strength and sim-

* In the Acts of the Assembly of 1781, no Act will be found formally approving of the Paraphrases; neither is such an Act to be found at any subsequent date. The following notices will show what took place in 1781 :—

Session 3.—The Committee reported that they "have now prepared such a collection of sacred poems as they think may be submitted to the judgment of the Church;—the Committee renewed, with additions thereto, and appointed to report their opinion of these poems, which are now printed for the perusal of the members, at a future diet of Assembly."

Session 8.—"The Report of the Committee on Translations and Paraphrases produced and read. The Report agreed to; and the Committee continued to make what corrections they may think necessary on the Paraphrases printed, and thereafter to transmit copies of the same to Presbyteries for their perusal;—the printer for the Church to have the sole privilege of printing and publishing these Translations and Paraphrases for the space of five years."

plicity with which it yields the very sense of the Hebrew bard. They wished a new translation adapted to the time. A committee of the General Assembly was appointed, and reappointed year after year.* A correspondence was opened with Sir Walter Scott, Crabbe, and other poets; but Scott discouraged the attempt, declaring that Rouse's version, "though homely, was plain, forcible, and intelligible, and very often possessed a rude sort of majesty, which would be ill exchanged for mere elegance."† The labours of the committee came to nought; and the Psalms remain to this day just as they were when they came from the hands of Rouse's emendators.

It certainly were wrong to lay aside a version of the Psalms, which, besides its intrinsic excellence, is now associated with the piety of the last two hundred years. But without being discarded, it might be amended. There are many verses which unfortunately offend both rhyme and reason, and give to every person of taste a mean idea of the lyric gifts of the Sweet Singer of Israel. These might be remodelled without wounding even the prejudices of those who love what is consecrated by time; and our piety would henceforward catch fresh force from the power of poesy, instead of being shocked, as it frequently is, by inanity and bad taste; and at the same time, out of those many splendid lyrics which genius has devoutly laid upon the altar of religion, might not some be chosen for the daily service of the temple, that all the multiform phases of spiritual feeling might find an utterance in sacred song?

As the nineteenth century dawned, a new race of men began to rise, destined to introduce a new order of things. In 1799 Thomas Chalmers was licensed to preach the gospel in his twentieth year, as "a lad of very pregnant parts."‡ Three years afterwards, Andrew Thomson received license. Sir Henry Moncreiff was now recognised as the leader of the Popular party in the Church, and by his great talents and

* The subject was before every Assembly from 1807 till 1822.

† In Lockhart's Life of Scott, there are some strange and interesting notices of the labours of the Psalmody Committee.

‡ Hanna's Life of Chalmers, vol. i.

business habits gave new vigour to a sinking cause. Possessed of a masculine mind, which soon mastered every subject with which it grappled, well versed in ecclesiastical law, and peculiarly ready in debate, he was well qualified to be the leader of a party. But though strongly liberal in his ecclesiastical politics, he cherished no asperity toward those who differed from him in sentiment. He had enjoyed the friendship of Principal Robertson, and could speak of him in the language of panegyric. Though often called to do battle with Principal Hill in the Assembly, he respected the purity of his motives and the dignity of his character, and their public differences did not destroy their mutual private regard. Lord Cockburn gives us a picture of him walking along Queen Street on a Sabbath-day from his house to the church, "with his bands, his little cocked hat, his tall cane, and his cardinal air."*

The first subject which violently agitated the Church was what has since been known as the Leslie Controversy. In 1805 the chair of Mathematics in the University of Edinburgh became vacant by the removal of Professor Playfair to the chair of Natural Philosophy. The town-council were patrons, and two candidates competed for their suffrages. The one was Mr Leslie, afterwards Sir John Leslie; the other was Mr Macknight, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, and son of the eminent commentator.† Leslie had already distinguished himself by his discoveries regarding the nature and properties of heat; he had received from the Royal Society the Rumford medal; and the highest scientific names in the kingdom recommended him as one who would do honour to the University. Mr Macknight was a man in every way respectable, and the Edinburgh clergy had set their hearts upon seeing their brother robed in the professorial gown. The majority of the scientific men in the kingdom still belonged to the clerical order; and, accordingly, the majority of the University chairs in the

* Cockburn's Memorials, p. 42.

† Besides these there were several other candidates, and amongst them Thomas Chalmers; but they either withdrew from the contest, or received very little support.

Faculty of Arts, as well as of Theology, had been usually occupied by ecclesiastics. It was thought there was no need of letting the chair of Mathematics slip, when there was a minister already in Edinburgh so well qualified as Macknight to fill it.

It soon became known that the great merits of Leslie were likely to carry the day. Unfortunately, polemical rancour came to the aid of disappointed ambition. The old cry, which has ruined many a good man, and spoiled many a good cause, was raised. It was said that Leslie was an infidel. It was insinuated that there were too many infidels in the University already. The Presbytery of Edinburgh addressed a Remonstrance to the Senatus Academicus touching their disuse of subscribing the Confession of Faith, notwithstanding the Acts of King William and Queen Anne. The Senatus replied that they were ready to put their names to the Confession when they were called upon to do so by the presbytery. The ministers of Edinburgh now addressed a Remonstrance to the patrons, grounded on a clause in the charter of the college, directing the magistrates to take the advice of the city clergy in the appointment of professors. The magistrates received the Remonstrance, and on the same night appointed Leslie to the mathematical chair.

The clergy based their charge of scepticism upon a note which Leslie had attached to his "Inquiry into the Nature of Heat," in which he had spoken of Hume's "Essay on Necessary Connection" as the most philosophical theory of causation which had yet been given to the world. Leslie protested that the note considered the relation between cause and effect entirely as an object of physical examination; and that as he did not, on the one hand, embrace the whole of Hume's sceptical system, neither was he bound on the other to point out the bad use which had been made of the theory of causation. He wrote to one of the magistrates, repudiating the sentiments with which he was charged; he wrote to Dr Hunter, the Professor of Divinity, in the same strain. But all would not do—the fatal note was still quoted against him.

As the ministers of Edinburgh repudiated the doctrine of

causation as taught by Hume and adopted by Leslie, they were obliged to state what was their own doctrine. This they did in their Protest and Remonstrance. They said it was orthodox to teach that there was such a necessary connection between cause and effect as implied an operating principle in the cause. They had ventured upon dangerous ground. In avoiding Scylla, they had dashed against Charybdis. Metaphysicians rose up and said that they had taught the gross Materialism of Spinoza—peradventure it had been unwittingly. If physical causes, it was argued, are possessed of active powers or operating principles in themselves, they are efficient causes; and hence there is no necessity to go beyond physical causes for the origin of all things. The foundations of natural religion are destroyed, for a Supreme Intelligence implies that the laws of nature are just God acting in and through what are called physical causes. Things happen as they do, not because there is any inherent property in them producing, but simply because God so willed it. What makes a stone fall to the ground? gravitation. What makes gravitation? God.

The Edinburgh clergy brought their Remonstrance and Protest before the presbytery, praying it to take such steps in the circumstances as seemed most agreeable to the civil and religious institutions of the kingdom. The matter went from the presbytery to the synod, and from the synod to the General Assembly. The Popular party marshalled themselves on the side of Leslie; the Moderates against him. It was strange that it should have been so; for hitherto the Moderates had been the most earnest advocates of intellectual liberty. They had defended Simson, Wishart, Leechman; they had saved Kames and Hume from excommunication; it was thought they had sheltered M'Gill; it was said they wished all creeds were burned, that so they themselves might think as they pleased. The Popular party, on the other hand, had too often exhibited a too eager desire to repress speculation, and anathematize the slightest deviation from the severest orthodoxy. They had now changed sides. Personalities often interfere with principles. The Moderates fought for a brother; the Popular party

fought against them, and on the side which was favoured by the liberal politicians of the day.

The debate in the Assembly was the most brilliant that any living man had listened to. It lasted for two days, and brought upon the floor peers and professors, lords of session and doctors of divinity. The "Edinburgh Review" had recently sprung from the brain of Scotland like a full-armed Minerva. It warmly espoused the cause of Leslie—it poured all its vials of contempt upon the bigots who obstructed his progress to the mathematical chair; but it confesses that the debate in the General Assembly could not have been matched in any other ecclesiastical assembly in the world. Sir Henry Moncreiff was the principal speaker on the side of Leslie. His mind was rather practical than metaphysical, but still he was well able to grasp any metaphysical subtleties that came in his way; and he did not fail to show that atheistic principles could be extracted from the theory of causation propounded by the ministers of Edinburgh, as easily as from that taught by Leslie and Hume. But still it was his object to avoid the thorny paths of metaphysics, and take a common-sense view of the subject, and in this he succeeded to admiration. Adam Gillies and James Moncreiff, both destined to rise to legal eminence, vigorously supported him. The Lord President Campbell and Lord Hermand gave their weight to the opposite side. But here the brunt of the battle was borne by Dr John Inglis and Principal Hill. Dr Inglis was fast climbing to supreme influence among the Moderate clergy. In this contest he was their metaphysical champion, and it was allowed that upon his own ground he had no match. Hill was more than usually plausible, and showed all the adroitness of a man well skilled to manage parties.

Towards the close of the discussion an elder rose to speak who had seldom or never spoken in that august assemblage before, though he had long charmed the most ingenuous youths of the country by the classic dignity of his elocution as he taught from the moral philosophy chair of Edinburgh. It was Dugald Stewart. He had taken a keen interest in the whole affair, though he seldom took much interest in

public matters. He had done all he could to help Leslie, both by recommending him to the magistrates, and defending him from the Press, and now he rose up to speak in his cause. He spoke a few sentences, such as those he usually spoke; but his indignation warming, and finding too full an utterance, he was saluted by cries of "Order;" and unaccustomed to such defiant shouts in the groves of the academy, he rapidly brought his speech to a close.

When the votes were counted, amidst an almost painful anxiety, it was found there were ninety-six votes for dismissing the case, and eighty-four for entertaining it—a result, the announcement of which was received by a loud shout from the gallery, which it was impossible to repress. The people, generally, regarded the decision of the Assembly as the triumph of liberal principles—as the emancipation of the universities from the tyranny of the Church. The Popular party received new popularity for their successful conflict in the cause of science; and the Moderates, with broken ranks and damaged character, never recovered the defeat of this disastrous day.*

Not long after this, dissension began to break out in the Moderate camp. Principal Hill, though the acknowledged leader of his party in the Assembly—for none could equal him in plausible speaking—was not always the originator of its measures. A club of Edinburgh ministers formed the central moving-power. They both laid the egg and hatched it, entrusting the chicken to the Principal's care. Of these Dr Finlayson, the Professor of Logic in the University, was the chief. He spoke little, but he thought much. His finger was in every plot, and he had a faculty for devising measures above most men. Associated with him was Dr Grieve, a bolder though not an abler man. When Principal Hill arrived in town to attend the Assembly, with his own views as to the measures which were to be discussed, he frequently found that his brethren had chalked out a different

* An interesting account of this controversy will be found in Lord Cockburn's Memorials. See also Dugald Stewart's Short Statement of Facts, &c., and the Edinburgh Review, No. xiii.; the paper in which is known to be from the pen of Leonard Horner.

line of tactics, which it behoved him to pursue. Principal Hill was eminently conciliatory in his dispositions as well as his manners; and when the views of his coadjutors did not contradict his ruling principles, he generally adopted them, and gave them such advocacy as he could. But a jarring chord was now struck, which destroyed the harmony that had hitherto subsisted.

It had long been contested whether the Court of Teinds, having augmented a stipend once, had power to augment it again. By a series of decisions, however, the court had found itself possessed of such a power, and had been in the habit of granting such augmentations.* Accordingly, in 1806, the minister of Avondale obtained from the Teind Court an augmentation of his stipend, which had been once, but only once, augmented since the Union; and when the judgment was pronounced, no objection was stated to the competency of the claim. The Duke of Hamilton, however, one of the principal heritors of the parish, entered an appeal to the House of Lords; and when it came to be discussed, the counsel very unexpectedly urged the plea of incompetency, which the clergy had thought was a settled question.

Alarmed at the thought of having the stipends of the country pinned down to a certain immovable point, above which they could not rise however much the wealth of the country might increase, the Edinburgh clergy determined to bring the matter before a meeting of the Commission, and urge that the Church should petition to be heard by counsel at the bar of the House of Peers, upon a subject which so greatly affected their interests. They wrote to Principal Hill, explained their views, and pressed him, if he could not attend the Commission himself, to get as many of his neighbours as possible to attend. Principal Hill replied, that he entirely disapproved of their plans; that he deprecated the interference of the Church in a private cause; and that he was very sure if the House of Lords, in its judicial capacity, was constrained to deprive them of the hope of increasing

* Connel on Tithes, vol. ii. An immense mass of interesting information upon this subject will also be found in the Appendix to the Treatise, which forms vol. iii.

their stipends, it would, in its legislative capacity, put all things right again. Anxious to have the opinion of Lord Melville, Dr Hill communicated the correspondence to him; and his Lordship not only expressed his concurrence, but wrote to Dr Grieve saying so.

The Edinburgh conclave, instead of being convinced by this, were nettled exceedingly. At the request of his colleagues, Dr Grieve wrote a tart letter to Dr Hill, blaming him for communicating the correspondence to Lord Melville without their consent; vindicating their original views; and broadly telling him that Edinburgh must ever be the centre of correspondence in regard to the interests of their party; and that, while the metropolitans might condescend to ask the aid and advice of the provincials, they must hold in their hands the management of affairs. Dr Hill was not a pugnacious man, or he might have hit back. He wrote a reply, in which, though there be no lack of proper spirit, there is not a single acrimonious word. He intimated his intention of gradually withdrawing himself from the strifes of the Assembly; but declared, that so long as he remained, he would give his best efforts to advance the views of his friends. "I shall deserve," said he, "to sink in the public estimation, if, after being in thirty-five Assemblies as a supporter of the Moderate interest, I did not persevere in that line till the end of my life." He did persevere, and for many years more was still the most attractive speaker, if not the busiest plotter, of the party to which he belonged.*

The theological literature of the country is now enriched by Principal Hill's "Lectures on Divinity," published after his death by his son.† The English language has no better compendium of theology. What Erskine's "Institutes" are to the Scotch lawyer, Hill's "Lectures" are to the Scotch divine. They exhibit no very vigorous thinking; they contain no very striking sentiments; but for clearness of state-

* Cook's Life of Dr Hill.

† Lectures on Divinity, by the late George Hill, D.D., Principal of St Mary's College, St Andrews; edited from his manuscript by his son, Alexander Hill, D.D.

ment, and fairness in unfolding the views of opponents, they are perhaps unrivalled. It has sometimes been said that Principal Hill has stated the opinions of the Arminians so strongly as to create a suspicion that he sympathized with them. None but a bigot would make the remark. A man may be a Calvinist, and yet be honest. A man may be orthodox, and yet be just to the heterodox. A man may firmly hold his own opinions, and yet count it a sin to distort or falsify the opinions of others. If Arminians, Arians, or Socinians have strong arguments, by all means let us hear them, for it is only thus that we can hope to arrive at the truth. If professors of theology are to urge the strongest reasons they can find on one side, and only the weakest on the other, they will soon be exposed to the derision, not only of their adversaries, but of their own students. The unflinching believer and the wise man, when called to lecture on controversial divinity, will purge his heart of the leaven of religious rancour, and give, with balanced impartiality, the views and the arguments alike of friends and of foes.

For several years after the Leslie Controversy was terminated, no question of general interest agitated the Church. There was, however, a quickening power abroad. New men were arising, bringing with them new ideas and new life. For long the Moderate party undoubtedly comprised the most accomplished men in the Church: the Wild, as their opponents were frequently called in derision, were too often illiberal and antiquated in their ideas; but now there was no such disparity. The Popular champions had thrown off the clothes which their grandfathers had worn, and appeared in garments suited to the fashion of the day. The Moderates had, in fact, now brought upon themselves the reproach of illiberality. They had done so by shutting their pulpits against the ministers of every Church in the world but their own; and they had done so by attempting to exclude Leslie, on the plea of infidelity, from the mathematical chair.

In 1810, the "Edinburgh Christian Instructor" appeared, under the editorship of Dr Andrew Thomson, and did for the liberal party in the Church what the "Edinburgh

Review" was at the same period doing for the liberal cause in the State.

At length, after half a century of importunity, parliament heard the prayer of the indigent ministers of the Church of Scotland, who had cried almost night and day for relief. Statesmen and senators had at last been convinced that it was not their interest to keep so many of the Presbyterian clergy on the footing of a mendicant order. On the 15th of June 1810, an Act was passed "For augmenting Parochial Stipends in certain cases in Scotland." In the preamble to this act it is set forth, that in many parishes of Scotland, on account of the depreciation of the value of money, the stipends of the ministers had become inadequate to their support, and that, on account of the valuation and purchase of the teinds, no fund existed out of which an augmentation could be got; that it was expedient that means should be provided for raising all such stipends to L.150 sterling; and that it appeared an annual sum of L.10,000 would be sufficient for the purpose. It was therefore enacted, that every year L.10,000 out of the public revenues should be set apart and appropriated in the hands of his Majesty's Receiver-General for effecting this object.

The clerks of all the presbyteries of the Church were instructed by the act to make up accounts of all the parishes within their bounds, the stipends of which did not amount to L.150. When these accounts were received, the Lords of Session, as Commissioners of Teinds, were empowered to consider any applications that might be made to them from ministers whose stipend fell short of the minimum fixed upon, and which could not be augmented under the laws already in force; to make up a list of such stipends, specifying of what they consisted—money, grain, or other articles; to calculate the value of the grain by the average of the last nine years, and to state the sums necessary to augment them to L.150, taking care that the whole augmentations did not exceed L.10,000. When the list was made up, a printed copy of it was to be sent to every minister whose stipend was included in the account transmitted from his presbytery, and to every presbytery-clerk, who was to report the

receipt of it to every minister within his jurisdiction. If any minister whose stipend was not specified as deficient thought that it should, he was at liberty to bring the matter before his presbytery; if any minister, richer than he was deemed, felt himself aggrieved by being ranked amongst the poor, he also might lay his plaint before his brethren; and the presbytery were authorized to report their opinion to the Lords Commissioners of Teinds, provided it was done within six months after the receipt of the list. If any minister thought himself wronged by his presbytery, he might petition the Commissioners of Teinds for redress. All such questions being settled, and a full list made up, which could no longer be challenged, it was to be recorded in the Books of the Commissioners of Teinds, and an extract of it was to be transmitted to the Barons of his Majesty's Exchequer, who were thereupon to issue a warrant to the Receiver-General, to pay to each of the ministers named the sum specified as necessary to make up his stipend to L.150.*

Thus many of the ministers of the Church of Scotland were rescued from humiliating indigence. In the middle of the eighteenth century many stipends were under L.50 a year; some so low as L.20. In the beginning of the nineteenth century, though some of these had been increased by augmentations where the teinds were not exhausted, others remained as before, notwithstanding that the expense of living had greatly increased. Great, therefore, must have been their poverty. Whenever any scheme was proposed to remedy this state of things which would throw the burden upon the heritors, the heritors strenuously opposed it; and so, for many long years, the Scottish clergy were left, like Goldsmith's curate, "passing rich with forty pounds a year." The imperial parliament generously set apart the requisite sum out of the public revenues, and so the Scotch clergy were raised to comfort without any violence being done to the pockets of the Scotch proprietary.

One hundred and fifty pounds is now understood to be

* Public General Statutes, 50 Geo. III. chap. 84.

the lowest stipend of any parish minister in Scotland.* This he enjoys, together with his manse and glebe; and upon this many men of no very lofty ambition, and no very prodigal habits, manage to live, and even to marry a wife and rear a family. In the Church of Scotland no stipend is very high; none very low. Unlike the Church of England, it has no bishoprics with L.10,000; no rectories with L.3000; but neither has it any parishes with only L.30 a year. It has no such wealth, and no such poverty. It presents something like parity in this respect, though it should in nothing else. Its ministers, as stipendiaries, stand upon an almost dead level. This equal distribution of the Church's wealth has both its advantages and its disadvantages. It keeps away the curse both of riches and of poverty; but it discourages that emulation and ambition which are necessary to the development of great talents, and the performance of eminent services.†

In 1813 the question of pluralities was again raised. There was nothing uncommon in a minister holding at the same time a professorship in a university, and a parish in the city where the university stood; but it was uncommon for a minister to be at once the occupant of an academic chair, and the incumbent of a parish distant many miles from the university seat. Instances of this, however, had occurred, notwithstanding the many acts of Assembly condemning non-residence—so long the curse both of the English and the Irish Church. In 1800, Dr Arnot, Professor of Divinity in

* Yet the minimum stipend in Scotland is not always exactly L.150. The sum in aid received from the Exchequer is a fixed sum, determined by the average price of grain during the nine years preceding 1810. When the grain happens to be higher than this average, the stipend rises proportionally above the L.150, and so *vice versa*.

What is here said does not apply to the ministers of *quoad sacra* parishes, or to the ministers of parishes erected under Sir James Graham's Act. The minimum stipend is there fixed at L.120.

† "Were I speaking here as a legislator," said Lord Chancellor Thurlow, in the House of Peers in 1784, "I would say that the wellbeing of Scotland was deeply concerned in making a more liberal provision for the clergy. I would have higher promotion, higher hopes, and greater preferment. It is that alone can keep the clergy in a situation to be of use to religion; for he must be a wretch indeed whose hopes are bounded by the scanty preferment of that country."

St Andrews, was presented to Kingsbarns, a parish six or seven miles distant; and though his induction was opposed, it was ultimately effected. A worse case, to be followed by more important consequences, now occurred. Mr Ferrie, the Professor of Civil History in the University of St Andrews, was presented to Kilconquhar, a parish twelve miles distant. It was evident that he could not reside in his parish, and at the same time attend upon his duties in the University. The presbytery therefore refused to admit him to the pastoral charge, unless he promised to demit his professorship immediately after his ordination. He declined to do this; the case went up to the Assembly, and, by the narrow majority of five, the presbytery was ordered to proceed with his settlement.

The agitation did not subside when this particular case was decided. It increased. It had hitherto been thought that the law of Residence would have prevented such an abuse. Thomas Chalmers, the minister of Kilmany, who was now beginning to take an interest in ecclesiastical business, thought, and many thought with him, that no special law was required in such a case. Such a union of offices, he held, was wrong at common law, and that was enough.* The main ground, however, on which the judgment of the General Assembly, in the case of Professor Ferrie, was grounded, was, that there was no specific law of the Church which met such a case. Where there was no law, there was no transgression.

The enemies of pluralities took the hint, and resolved that, if there was no law to prevent such a case as Ferrie's, there should be one. The General Assembly is a legislative as well as a judicial body. It can make laws where there are none. Where a defect is discovered, it can be supplied. The Synod of Angus and Mearns brought the matter before the Assembly of 1814; and, after a keen discussion, it was declared to be inconsistent with the fundamental laws of the Church for a minister to hold any office which required his absence from his parish. As this act was regarded as merely declaratory of acts already in existence, it was not

* Hanna's Memoirs of Dr Chalmers, vol. i.

sent down to the presbyteries for their consideration, but entered at once upon the Assembly Record.

The defeated Pluralists seized upon this to renew the contest. They declared that the act was really a new act, and therefore required to be subjected to the ordeal of the Barrier Law. Principal Hill put forth all his strength to prove this in the Assembly of 1815; but he was encountered by a young man who greatly revered his character, and generally followed in his footsteps. It was George Cook, the minister of Laurencekirk, the historian of the Reformation and the Church of Scotland, and destined to become the leader of the Moderate party in troublous times. The veteran captain was defeated by his own subaltern, and the act pronounced to be declaratory, and therefore in force without transmission.*

But the followers of Dr Hill drew vigour from defeat. They raised the cry that the Church was in danger. The Barrier Act, the very palladium of their liberty, it was said, was contemptuously cast aside. Presbyteries were pushed out of the way. The General Assembly had usurped the powers of the universal Church. The Act of 1814 must be rescinded if the constitution of the Church was to be preserved. These sayings were sown broadcast among the presbyteries; the presbyteries believed them, and resolved to make a stand for their rights. Overtures upon overtures came drifting into the Assembly of 1816, praying it to undo its own legislation, as unsanctioned by the presbyteries. The agitation succeeded, and the obnoxious act was repealed.†

But it was repealed only to be replaced by another of a similar mould. To this new act Principal Hill lent the sanction of his name and the weight of his eloquence. Like most men who have thought upon the subject, he was convinced that a system of non-residence must be the ruin of the Church. Parishes were not meant to be sinecures. It looks ill for an English rector to hold a parish in Yorkshire, and reside during the year at Bath or at Wells. It would have been worse if a Scotch minister could have held a

* Cook's Life of Principal Hill.

† Cook's Life of Hill. Hanna's Memoirs of Chalmers.

living in Perthshire, while he resided at St Andrews or Edinburgh. This feeling was widely prevalent in the Assembly; and accordingly an overture was framed, transmitted to the presbyteries, and, being approved of by a great majority, was in 1817 converted into an act. By this act it is declared that no professor in a university can hold a parish unless it be close by the university seat.*

Flushed with their success, the Antipluralists resolved upon the entire abolition of pluralities in the Church. They had not to wait long for an opportunity to show their metal, and act upon their principles. In 1823 Dr Duncan Macfarlane, Principal of the University of Glasgow, was presented by the Crown to the High Church of Glasgow. When the presentation was laid upon the presbytery-table, as there was considerable hesitation about sustaining it, it was resolved to let it lie over till next meeting. In the interval a formidable opposition was organized. At the head of it were Dr M'Gill, Professor of Divinity in the University, and Dr Chalmers, then toiling in the parish of St John's; charming the city of the west by his exuberant eloquence; beautifying every topic which he touched; building churches; founding schools; visiting soup-kitchens; and taking the whole pauper population of his great parish under his care. They held that a parish—especially such a parish as St Mungo's—required the undivided attention of any man, however able and indefatigable he might be. Its degraded thousands could not be properly cared for by a man who was already burdened by the duties of a principality.†

Dr Chalmers had not always been the enemy of pluralities; he had not always entertained such notions of the magnitude of the ministerial work. When minister of Kilmany, he had asserted in a pamphlet, called forth by the Leslie Controversy, "that after the satisfactory discharge of his parish duties, a minister may enjoy five days in the week of uninterrupted leisure for the prosecution of any science in which his taste may dispose him to engage." But the importance of the ministerial work had been gradually growing in his mind; he had discovered how much his hand might

* Acts of Assembly, p. 959. † Hanna's Memoirs of Dr Chalmers, vol. i.

find to do, if he only wished to do it; and he now set his face like a flint against the combination of a parish and a principality. But there were special circumstances which awakened in Dr Chalmers's mind a special dislike of the contemplated conjunction. He had already begun that agitation for Church Extension which afterwards led to such important results. He had managed to raise funds for building a chapel in his own parish. Others were about to follow his example. The plea he had everywhere put forth was, that no minister was able, adequately, to superintend a population of eight or ten thousand souls; and that the great city parishes must be broken down and divided among many ministers, if they would be saved from heathenism. But how could he utter this argument again, if he gave his sanction to one of the most important of the city parishes being handed over to a man already fettered by university obligations?*

The Presbytery of Glasgow was swayed by such arguments as these, and, by a considerable majority, "judged it to be both inexpedient and incompetent to proceed in the presentation laid on their table to Dr Macfarlane, in respect that he appears to them to be, in *hoc statu*, an unqualified presentee." The case was appealed to the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr; Chalmers and M'Gill were heard at the bar, and the resolution of the presbytery was affirmed.

The Principal was not disposed to yield, and the case went up to the Assembly which met in 1824. The fervid appeal of Dr Chalmers at the bar was supported by the manly eloquence of Dr Andrew Thomson in the House; and the Pluralists, on the other hand, strained their utmost, for they knew that if the sentence of the synod was affirmed, pluralities were for ever gone. They were snug things, worth the fighting for. They fought well, and they carried the day. The sentence of the synod was reversed, and the Presbytery of Glasgow ordered to admit Principal Macfarlane minister of the High Church.

The same subject was brought before the same Assembly by a whole host of overtures, and the discussion was re-

* Hanna's Memoirs of Dr Chalmers, vol. i.

sumed, but with a similar result. The overtures were thrown out. Next year overtures again poured in upon the Assembly, and again the Assembly refused to entertain them. By 1827 a Royal Commission upon the Universities of Scotland was sitting, and upon that plea the reconsideration of the subject was resisted. It was not resumed till the Church was on the eve of a great catastrophe, which rent it in twain; but the University Commission put its stamp of disapproval upon pluralities.

Yet pluralities exist. In the Church one or two remain, the last memorials of palmier times; but in the faculties of law and medicine they are rife. There are professors in our universities who work as hard in the Parliament-house as any minister in his parish. There are surgeons and physicians who hold academic seats with distinguished honour, and yet manage an enormous practice. Neither the university nor the city complain; neither the lecture-room nor the sick-room is neglected. If lawyers and doctors can do this, why should not ministers? Is their work necessarily heavier? are their energies necessarily less? Why, in short, should not the same rule be applied to all the faculties, be it for, or be it against? But the Church of Scotland has ever been a self-denying community. It might have had episcopal revenues, and it refused them. It might have had seats in parliament, but it declined them. It had professorships and principalities, and it threw them away.

Amid these controversies the Church was girding herself to enter the missionary field, now white unto the harvest. Within twenty-five years a vast change had come over the public mind in regard to missions. At the beginning of the century, almost every Church in Scotland regarded foreign missions as utopian and absurd. Before the first quarter of the century had run its course, almost every Church had made up its mind that foreign missions were obligatory and right. Bible societies, missionary societies, had sprung up in every corner. Sermons were preached, prayers were offered up, money was collected. This feeling soon obtained an advocate in the Church Courts. Dr Inglis

is the man who has the great honour of having for the first time brought the subject of foreign missions prominently before the Church. He stood foremost among the leaders of the Moderate party. His strong sense, his resolute reasoning, his force of character, gave him a quick superiority over most men with whom he measured weapons. He had none of the graces of oratory, but in argument he was a dangerous man to meddle with. He did not rush into the midst of a debate with the chivalrous impetuosity of Dr Thomson, or the fiery enthusiasm of Dr Chalmers; but when he came to grapple with his adversary, he was heavier and sturdier than either. To a massive intellect he joined benevolent dispositions; and an unobtrusive piety was the growth of the two. Men of all parties respected him.

In 1824 he brought the subject of foreign missions before the General Assembly. It was known that he was no enthusiast, and this at once enlisted the sympathies of the most cautious upon his side. Dr Bryce, at that time first minister of the Presbyterian Church in Calcutta, gave the results of his own extensive Indian experience. The Assembly at once, and with perfect unanimity, appointed a committee to organize a scheme of operations. The committee set to work, and the sagacity of Dr Inglis was conspicuously displayed in chalking out plans, whose wisdom have been amply justified by subsequent experience. The subject was afterwards before the Assemblies of 1825 and 1826; a pastoral address from the pen of Dr Inglis was read in all the congregations of the Church; collections were made; supplications offered up to Almighty God; and in 1829 Dr Duff, glowing with the zeal of a primitive apostle, sailed for India—the first missionary of the Church of Scotland.

The religious zeal which was now everywhere abroad led to a controversy which for several years violently agitated the public mind. The British and Foreign Bible Society had been constituted for the purpose of distributing the Sacred Scriptures without note or comment. For a great many years, however, the acting committee in London had been printing and circulating editions with the Apocryphal books included; editions with Neologian prefaces; editions

with suspicious foot-notes. This was done upon the principle of becoming all things to all men. The conduct and maxims of Paul were quoted in support of it. The Roman Catholics, it was said, would not otherwise receive the Bible; the Eastern Church would not receive it; the Neologians of Germany would not receive it. Was it not better that the Bible with Apocryphal additions should find an entrance among these people, than that it should not find an entrance at all. The Sacred Oracles would do good; the Apocrypha would do no harm. The tares and the wheat might be allowed to grow together.

Robert Haldane—whose character, long ago established for benevolence and missionary zeal, had recently risen to a higher level from his labours among the students at Geneva, and his "Exposition of the Romans"—was the first to detect and remonstrate against the practice. He was soon joined by Dr Andrew Thomson, who acted as secretary to the Edinburgh Bible Society. Pamphlets followed pamphlets, like barbed and pointed, and, sometimes, like poisoned arrows. The "Christian Instructor" abounded with articles bearing the stamp of the masculine mind of its editor. The religious world, both in England and Scotland, was divided. Good men were found ranged on either side. The controversy assumed a more and more serious aspect as it advanced. The canon of Scripture was called in question. So good a man and so able a scholar as Dr Pye Smith took part with the Apocryphists, and pointed to more books than one of the Old Testament, the divine authority of which he declared to be very questionable. The controversy resulted in the rupture of the Edinburgh and London Bible Societies; but it also led to the ultimate banishment of the Apocrypha from the Bible.*

When Dr Chalmers was minister of St John's in Glasgow, he had as his assistant a young man—Edward Irving. He was upwards of six feet high, with black bushy hair, and a "portentous obliquity of vision." In the pulpit his manner

* Abundant information upon this interesting controversy will be got in the "Edinburgh Christian Instructor," the pamphlets of the period, and the "Lives of the Haldanes."

was odd, and his utterances somewhat unintelligible, so that he was never very popular; but his friends knew him to be a large-hearted, genial man, with a strong dash of genius. From Glasgow he went to London, where, giving full swing to his mystic fancy, he soon became the most popular preacher in the great metropolis. Carriages, with coronets painted on their doors, were drawn up before his church. Actors and actresses behind the scenes talked of going to hear him preach. There was no man in all London better known than Edward Irving. But his head got dizzy from the toppling height to which he had ascended. He began to put wild meanings upon prophecy, and to speak of the personal advent of Christ. In 1828 he visited Scotland. At six o'clock in the morning he preached in Edinburgh, and at five o'clock crowds rose from their beds and hurried to hear him. He passed on to Kirkcaldy. There also he was to preach, for there he had taught a school, and there he had wooed and won his wife. The church was crammed to excess, and before the preacher entered the pulpit one of the galleries came down with a crash, and nearly forty lives were lost. Poor Irving wandered farther and farther from the truth. He began to teach the peccability of Christ's humanity, to speak in unknown tongues, and to believe that the millennium was at hand. It became evident that his once majestic mind was fast wandering from the domain of reason in the pursuit of its own disordered fancies. He was cut off from the Church, came down to Glasgow, and died there; but he left some behind him who regarded him as a prophet. In the crypt of Glasgow Cathedral was he buried, and when the mourners retired, they left still standing at his grave a number of young women clothed in white, who confidently expected that he was immediately to rise again.*

About the same time Mr Campbell of Row, in the quietude of his Highland parish, washed by the Clyde and the Gairloch, began to brood upon doctrines deemed heretical. He taught that Christ had died for all, and that assurance was

* This incident was told me by the late Dr Black of the Barony, who was present at the funeral; it was told standing by the stone under which Irving lay buried.

of the essence of faith. His intellect was not vigorous, but his sincerity was deep, which made many respect him. He was at that time a pale, earnest-looking man—the picture of an enthusiast; and, as he was an anxious apostle of his faith, he gathered followers. With Edward Irving, he held that the miraculous gift bestowed upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost belonged to the universal Church. Devout ladies, who had learned religion from his lips, began to speak in unknown tongues, and to talk about walking upon the sea. Miraculous cures were said to be performed, and sober-minded people began to marvel whereunto these things would grow. The General Assembly, having no faith in such doctrines, or in such pretensions, deposed Campbell, and the Row Heresy dwindled away; but still the vestiges of both Irving and Campbell's teaching may be traced.

In 1831 Dr Andrew Thomson dropped down dead at his own door. He died young, but not so young but that he left his character stamped on his age. Above all Scotch ecclesiastics he was like Andrew Melville. He had the same intrepidity, the same manliness of sentiment, the same fondness for debate, the same overbearing dogmatism, the common infirmity of powerful minds. Strong in his own opinions, he had little tolerance for the opinions of others. But though a violent partisan, he was no bigot; and he exercised a prodigious influence for good upon Edinburgh society.

Meanwhile it was becoming more evident every day that a new ecclesiastical era was approaching. The Popular party was rapidly gaining ground. An anti-patronage society had been formed; and the Voluntary Controversy, which was now beginning to rage, made Churchmen more anxious than ever to rid their Church of every abuse, that so they might more easily defend it. Like sailors, they would fain have lightened the ship to prepare her for the storm. Political events gave fresh impulse to the movement. In 1829 the Roman Catholic Relief Bill was passed, and the Romanists of Scotland, after nearly three centuries of proscription, were emancipated, not merely from civil pains, but from political disabilties, and raised to the position of citizens and subjects.

The great truth—the product of much sweat and blood—was at length written in the statute-book of the country, that no man was to be robbed of his birthright as a Briton on account of the religious opinions which he held. In 1831 the Reform Bill was passed, which, conferring the franchise upon thousands who never possessed it before, almost revolutionized the State, and created a tendency toward liberalism in all things.

The Church felt the movement. Patronage was thought to be the only trace of despotism in an institution otherwise purely republican. The subject was laid before parliament, but parliament did nothing. The General Assembly proceeded to legislate for itself, and passed the Veto Act.

But now we approach the region of living men, where character is sacred, and passion is strong; and therefore we reverently turn aside.

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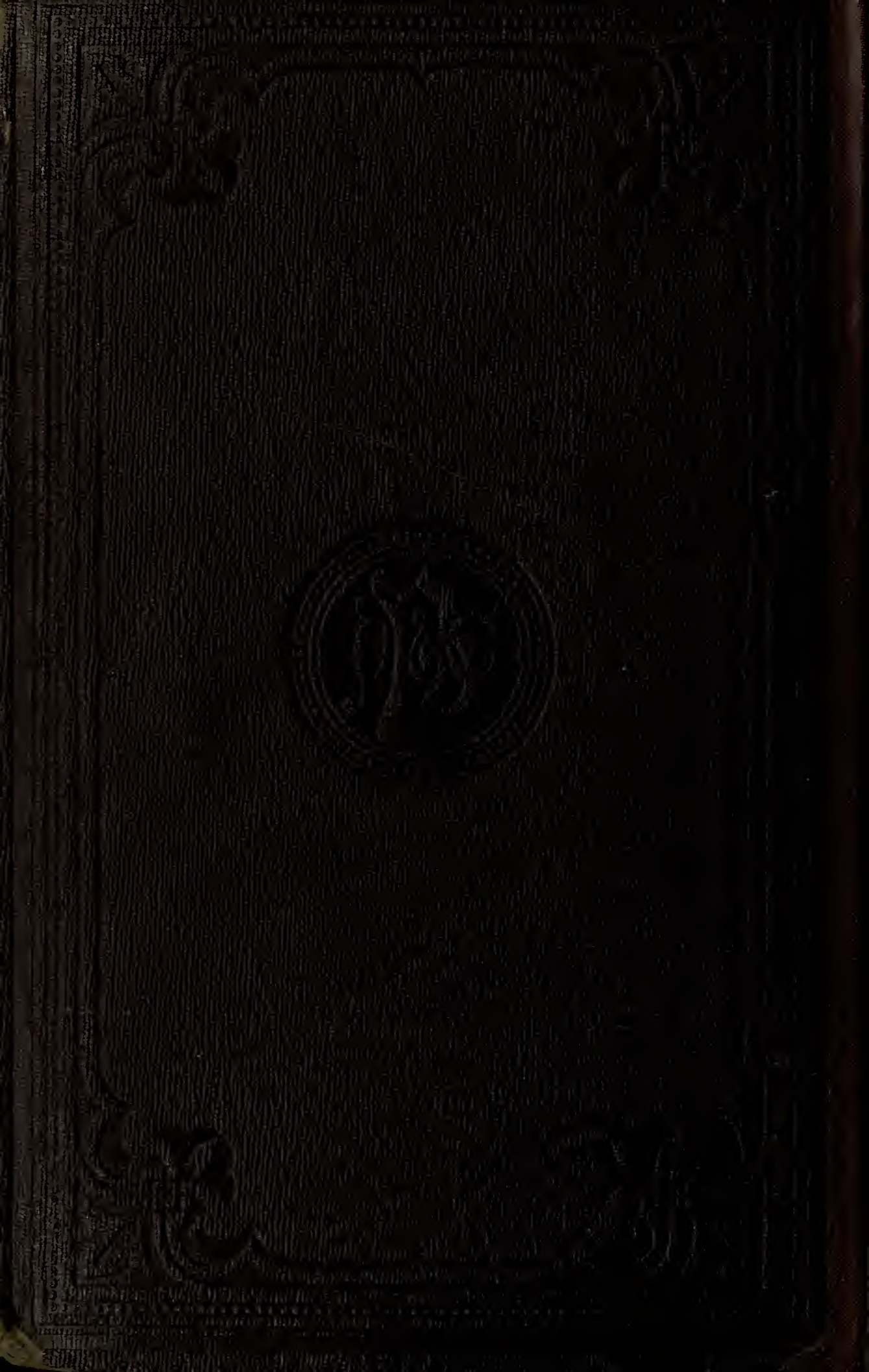
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